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THE

DIALOGUES OF PLATO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

WITH ANALYSES AND INTRODUCTIONS

BY

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IN FIVE VOLUMES: VOL. I.

Third Edition
Revised and Corrected Throughout

WITH MARGINAL ANALYSES AND OTHER ADDITIONS, AND AN
INDEX OF SUBJECTS AND PROPER NAMES

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TO MY FORMER PUPILS

IN BALLIOL COLLEGE

AND IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

WHO DURING FIFTY YEARS

HAVE BEEN THE BEST OF FRIENDS TO ME,

THESE VOLUMES ARE INSCRIBED,

IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION

OF THEIR NEVER FAILING ATTACHMENT.

THE additions and alterations which have been made, both in the Introductions and in the Text of this Edition, affect at least a third of the work.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE Text which has been mostly followed in this Translation of Plato is the latest 8vo. edition of Stallbaum; the principal deviations are noted at the bottom of the page.

I have to acknowledge many obligations to old friends and pupils. These are:—Mr. John Purves, Fellow of Balliol College, with whom I have revised about half of the entire Translation; the Rev. Professor Campbell, of St. Andrews, who has helped me in the revision of several parts of the work, especially of the Theaetetus, Sophist, and Politicus; Mr. Robinson Ellis, Fellow of Trinity College, and Mr. Alfred Robinson, Fellow of New College, who read with me the Cratylus and the Gorgias; Mr. Paravicini, Student of Christ Church, who assisted me in the Symposium; Mr. Raper, Fellow of Queen's College, Mr. Monro, Fellow of Oriel College, and Mr. Shadwell, Student of Christ Church, who gave me similiar assistance in the Laws. Dr. Greenhill, of Hastings, has also kindly sent me remarks on the physiological part of the Timaeus, which I have inserted as corrections under the head of *errata* at the end of the Introduction. The degree of accuracy which I have been enabled to attain is in great measure due

to these gentlemen, and I heartily thank them for the pains and time which they have bestowed on my work.

I have further to explain how far I have received help from other labourers in the same field. The books which I have found of most use are Steinhart and Müller's German Translation of Plato with Introductions; Zeller's 'Philosophie der Griechen,' and 'Platonische Studien;' Susemihl's 'Genetische Entwickelung der Platonischen Philosophie;' Hermann's 'Geschichte der Platonischen Philosophie;' Bonitz, 'Platonische Studien;' Stallbaum's Notes and Introductions; Professor Campbell's editions of the 'Theaetetus,' the 'Sophist,' and the 'Politicus;' Professor Thompson's 'Phaedrus;' Th. Martin's 'Études sur le Timée;' Mr. Poste's edition and translation of the 'Philebus;' the Translation of the 'Republic,' by Messrs. Davies and Vaughan, and the Translation of the 'Gorgias,' by Mr. Cope.

I have also derived much assistance from the great work of Mr. Grote, which contains excellent analyses of the Dialogues, and is rich in original thoughts and observations. I agree with him in rejecting as futile the attempt of Schleiermacher and others to arrange the Dialogues of Plato into a harmonious whole. Any such arrangement appears to me not only to be unsupported by evidence, but to involve an anachronism in the history of philosophy. There is a common spirit in the writings of Plato, but not a unity of design in the whole, nor perhaps a perfect unity in any single Dialogue. The hypothesis of a general plan which is worked out in the successive Dialogues is an after-thought of the critics who have attributed a system to writings belonging to an age when system had not as yet taken possession of philosophy.

If Mr. Grote should do me the honour to read any portion of this work he will probably remark that I have

endeavoured to approach Plato from a point of view which is opposed to his own. The aim of the Introductions in these volumes has been to represent Plato as the father of Idealism, who is not to be measured by the standard of utilitarianism or any other modern philosophical system. He is the poet or maker of ideas, satisfying the wants of his own age, providing the instruments of thought for future generations. He is no dreamer, but a great philosophical genius struggling with the unequal conditions of light and knowledge under which he is living. He may be illustrated by the writings of moderns, but he must be interpreted by his own, and by his place in the history of philosophy. We are not concerned to determine what is the residuum of truth which remains for ourselves. His truth may not be our truth, and nevertheless may have an extraordinary value and interest for us.

I cannot agree with Mr. Grote in admitting as genuine all the writings commonly attributed to Plato in antiquity, any more than with Schaarschmidt and some other German critics who reject nearly half of them. The German critics, to whom I refer, proceed chiefly on grounds of internal evidence; they appear to me to lay too much stress on the variety of doctrine and style, which must be equally acknowledged as a fact, even in the Dialogues regarded by Shaarschmidt as genuine, e. g. in the Phaedrus, or Symposium, when compared with the Laws. He who admits works so different in style and matter to have been the composition of the same author, need have no difficulty (see vol. iv, Appendix) in admitting the Sophist or the Politicus. [The negative argument adduced by the same school of critics, which is based on the silence of Aristotle, is not worthy of much consideration. For why should Aristotle, because he has quoted several Dialogues of Plato, have quoted them all? Something must be allowed to chance, and to the nature of the subjects treated

of in them.] On the other hand, Mr. Grote trusts mainly to the Alexandrian Canon. But I hardly think that we are justified in attributing much weight to the authority of the Alexandrian librarians in an age when there was no regular publication of books, and every temptation to forge them; and in which the writings of a school were naturally attributed to the founder of the school. And even without intentional fraud, there was an inclination to believe rather than to enquire. Would Mr. Grote accept as genuine all the writings which he finds in the lists of learned ancients attributed to Hippocrates, to Xenophon, to Aristotle? The Alexandrian Canon of the Platonic writings is deprived of credit by the admission of the Epistles, which are not only unworthy of Plato, and in several passages plagiarized from him, but flagrantly at variance with historical fact. It will be seen also that I do not agree with Mr. Grote's views about the Sophists; nor with the low estimate which he has formed of Plato's Laws; nor with his opinion respecting Plato's doctrine of the rotation of the earth. But I 'am not going to lay hands on my father Parmenides' [Soph. 241 D], who will, I hope, forgive me for differing from him on these points. I cannot close this Preface without expressing my deep respect for his noble and gentle character, and the great services which he has rendered to Greek Literature.

Balliol College,
January, 1871.

PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND AND THIRD EDITIONS.

In publishing a Second Edition (1875) of the Dialogues of Plato in English, I had to acknowledge the assistance of several friends: of the Rev. G. G. Bradley, Master of University College, now Dean of Westminster, who sent me some valuable remarks on the Phaedo; of Dr. Greenhill, who had again revised a portion of the Timaeus; of Mr. R. L. Nettleship, Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, to whom I was indebted for an excellent criticism of the Parmenides; and, above all, of the Rev. Professor Campbell of St. Andrews, and Mr. Paravicini, late Student of Christ Church and Tutor of Balliol College, with whom I had read over the greater part of the translation. I was also indebted to Mr. Evelyn Abbott, Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, for a complete and accurate index.

In this, the Third Edition, I am under very great obligations to Mr. Matthew Knight, who has not only favoured me with valuable suggestions throughout the work, but has largely extended the Index (from 61 to 175 pages) and translated the Eryxias and Second Alcibiades; and to Mr. Frank Fletcher, of Balliol College, my Secretary, who has assisted me chiefly in Vols. iii, iv, and v. I am also considerably indebted to Mr. J. W. Mackail, late Fellow of

Balliol College, who read over the Republic in the Second Edition and noted several inaccuracies.

In both editions the Introductions to the Dialogues have been enlarged, and essays on subjects having an affinity to the Platonic Dialogues have been introduced into several of them. The analyses have been corrected, and innumerable alterations have been made in the Text. There have been added also, in the Third Edition, headings to the pages and a marginal analysis to the text of each dialogue.

At the end of a long task, the translator may without impropriety point out the difficulties which he has had to encounter. These have been far greater than he would have anticipated; nor is he at all sanguine that he has succeeded in overcoming them. Experience has made him feel that a translation, like a picture, is dependent for its effect on very minute touches; and that it is a work of infinite pains, to be returned to in many moods and viewed in different lights.

I. An English translation ought to be idiomatic and interesting, not only to the scholar, but to the unlearned reader. Its object should not simply be to render the words of one language into the words of another or to preserve the construction and order of the original;—this is the ambition of a schoolboy, who wishes to show that he has made a good use of his Dictionary and Grammar; but is quite unworthy of the translator, who seeks to produce on his reader an impression similar or nearly similar to that produced by the original. To him the feeling should be more important than the exact word. He should remember Dryden's quaint admonition not to 'lacquey by the side of his author, but to mount up behind him[1].' He must carry in his mind a comprehensive view of the whole

[1] Dedication to the Æneis.

work, of what has preceded and of what is to follow,—as well as of the meaning of particular passages. His version should be based, in the first instance, on an intimate knowledge of the text; but the precise order and arrangement of the words may be left to fade out of sight, when the translation begins to take shape. He must form a general idea of the two languages, and reduce the one to the terms of the other. His work should be rhythmical and varied, the right admixture of words and syllables, and even of letters, should be carefully attended to; above all, it should be equable in style. There must also be quantity, which is necessary in prose as well as in verse: clauses, sentences, paragraphs, must be in due proportion. Metre and even rhyme may be rarely admitted; though neither is a legitimate element of prose writing, they may help to lighten a cumbrous expression (cp. Symp. 185 D, 197, 198). The translation should retain as far as possible the characteristic qualities of the ancient writer—his freedom, grace, simplicity, stateliness, weight, precision; or the best part of him will be lost to the English reader. It should read as an original work, and should also be the most faithful transcript which can be made of the language from which the translation is taken, consistently with the first requirement of all, that it be English. Further, the translation being English, it should also be perfectly intelligible in itself without reference to the Greek, the English being really the more lucid and exact of the two languages. In some respects it may be maintained that ordinary English writing, such as the newspaper article, is superior to Plato: at any rate it is couched in language which is very rarely obscure. On the other hand, the greatest writers of Greece, Thucydides, Plato, Æschylus, Sophocles, Pindar, Demosthenes, are generally those which are found

to be most difficult and to diverge most widely from the English idiom. The translator will often have to convert the more abstract Greek into the more concrete English, or *vice versa*, and he ought not to force upon one language the character of another. In some cases, where the order is confused, the expression feeble, the emphasis misplaced, or the sense somewhat faulty, he will not strive in his rendering to reproduce these characteristics, but will re-write the passage as his author would have written it at first, had he not been 'nodding'; and he will not hesitate to supply anything which, owing to the genius of the language or some accident of composition, is omitted in the Greek, but is necessary to make the English clear and consecutive.

It is difficult to harmonize all these conflicting elements. In a translation of Plato what may be termed the interests of the Greek and English are often at war with one another. In framing the English sentence we are insensibly diverted from the exact meaning of the Greek; when we return to the Greek we are apt to cramp and overlay the English. We substitute, we compromise, we give and take, we add a little here and leave out a little there. The translator may sometimes be allowed to sacrifice minute accuracy for the sake of clearness and sense. But he is not therefore at liberty to omit words and turns of expression which the English language is quite capable of supplying. He must be patient and self-controlled; he must not be easily run away with. Let him never allow the attraction of a favourite expression, or a sonorous cadence, to overpower his better judgment, or think much of an ornament which is out of keeping with the general character of his work. He must ever be casting his eyes upwards from the copy to the original, and down again

from the original to the copy (Rep. vi. 501 A). His calling is not held in much honour by the world of scholars; yet he himself may be excused for thinking it a kind of glory to have lived so many years in the companionship of one of the greatest of human intelligences, and in some degree, more perhaps than others, to have had the privilege of understanding him (cp. Sir Joshua Reynolds' Lectures: Disc. xv. *sub fin.*).

There are fundamental differences in Greek and English, of which some may be managed while others remain intractable. (1). The structure of the Greek language is partly adversative and alternative, and partly inferential; that is to say, the members of a sentence are either opposed to one another, or one of them expresses the cause or effect or condition or reason of another. The two tendencies may be called the horizontal and perpendicular lines of the language; and the opposition or inference is often much more one of words than of ideas. But modern languages have rubbed off this adversative and inferential form: they have fewer links of connexion, there is less mortar in the interstices, and they are content to place sentences side by side, leaving their relation to one another to be gathered from their position or from the context. The difficulty of preserving the effect of the Greek is increased by the want of adversative and inferential particles in English, and by the nice sense of tautology which characterizes all modern languages. We cannot have two 'buts' or two 'fors' in the same sentence where the Greek repeats ἀλλὰ or γάρ. There is a similar want of particles expressing the various gradations of objective and subjective thought — που, δή, μήν, μέντοι, and the like, which are so thickly scattered over the Greek page. Further, we can only realize to a very imperfect

degree the common distinction between οὐ and μή, and the combination of the two suggests a subtle shade of negation which cannot be expressed in English. And while English is more dependent than Greek upon the apposition of clauses and sentences, yet there is a difficulty in using this form of construction owing to the want of case endings. For the same reason there cannot be an equal variety in the order of words or an equal nicety of emphasis in English as in Greek.

(2). The formation of the sentence and of the paragraph greatly differs in Greek and English. The lines by which they are divided are generally much more marked in modern languages than in ancient. Both sentences and paragraphs are more precise and definite — they do not run into one another. They are also more regularly developed from within. The sentence marks another step in an argument or a narrative or a statement; in reading a paragraph we silently turn over the page and arrive at some new view or aspect of the subject. Whereas in Plato we are not always certain where a sentence begins and ends; and paragraphs are few and far between. The language is distributed in a different way, and less articulated than in English. For it was long before the true use of the period was attained by the classical writers both in poetry or prose; it was πολλῆς πείρας τελευταῖον ἐπιγέννημα. The balance of sentences and the introduction of paragraphs at suitable intervals must not be neglected if the harmony of the English language is to be preserved. And still a caution has to be added on the other side, that we must avoid giving it a numerical or mechanical character.

(3). This, however, is not one of the greatest difficulties of the translator; much greater is that which arises from the restriction of the use of the genders. Men and women

in English are masculine and feminine, and there is a similar distinction of sex in the words denoting animals; but all things else, whether outward objects or abstract ideas, are relegated to the class of neuters. Hardly in some flight of poetry do we ever endue any of them with the characteristics of a sentient being, and then only by speaking of them in the feminine gender. The virtues may be pictured in female forms, but they are not so described in language; a ship is humorously supposed to be the sailor's bride; more doubtful are the personifications of church and country as females. Now the genius of the Greek language is the opposite of this. The same tendency to personification which is seen in the Greek mythology is common also in the language; and genders are attributed to things as well as persons according to their various degrees of strength and weakness; or from fanciful resemblances to the male or female form, or some analogy too subtle to be discovered. When the gender of any object was once fixed, a similar gender was naturally assigned to similar objects, or to words of similar formation. This use of genders in the denotation of objects or ideas not only affects the words to which genders are attributed, but the words with which they are construed or connected, and passes into the general character of the style. Hence arises a difficulty in translating Greek into English which cannot altogether be overcome. Shall we speak of the soul and its qualities, of virtue, power, wisdom, and the like, as feminine or neuter? The usage of the English language does not admit of the former, and yet the life and beauty of the style are impaired by the latter. Often the translator will have recourse to the repetition of the word, or to the ambiguous 'they,' 'their,' &c.; for fear of spoiling

the effect of the sentence by introducing 'it.' Collective nouns in Greek and English create a similar but lesser awkwardness.

(4). The use of relation is far more extended in Greek than in English. Partly the greater variety of genders and cases makes the connexion of relative and antecedent less ambiguous: partly also the greater number of demonstrative and relative pronouns, and the use of the article, make the correlation of ideas simpler and more natural. The Greek appears to have had an ear or intelligence for a long and complicated sentence which is rarely to be found in modern nations; and in order to bring the Greek down to the level of the modern, we must break up the long sentence into two or more short ones. Neither is the same precision required in Greek as in Latin or English, nor in earlier Greek as in later; there was nothing shocking to the contemporary of Thucydides and Plato in anacolutha and repetitions. In such cases the genius of the English language requires that the translation should be more intelligible than the Greek. The want of more distinctions between the demonstrative pronouns is also greatly felt. Two genitives dependent on one another, unless familiarised by idiom, have an awkward effect in English. Frequently the noun has to take the place of the pronoun. 'This' and 'that' are found repeating themselves to weariness in the rough draft of a translation. As in the previous case, while the feeling of the modern language is more opposed to tautology, there is also a greater difficulty in avoiding it.

(5). Though no precise rule can be laid down about the repetition of words, there seems to be a kind of impertinence in presenting to the reader the same thought in the same words, repeated twice over in the same

passage without any new aspect or modification of it. And the evasion of tautology — that is, the substitution of one word of precisely the same meaning for another — is resented by us equally with the repetition of words. Yet on the other hand the least difference of meaning or the least change of form from a substantive to an adjective, or from a participle to a verb, will often remedy the unpleasant effect. Rarely and only for the sake of emphasis or clearness can we allow an important word to be used twice over in two successive sentences or even in the same paragraph. The particles and pronouns, as they are of most frequent occurrence, are also the most troublesome. Strictly speaking, except a few of the commonest of them, 'and,' 'the,' &c., they ought not to occur twice in the same sentence. But the Greek has no such precise rules; and hence any literal translation of a Greek author is full of tautology. The tendency of modern languages is to become more correct as well as more perspicuous than ancient. And, therefore, while the English translator is limited in the power of expressing relation or connexion, by the law of his own language increased precision and also increased clearness are required of him. The familiar use of logic, and the progress of science, have in these two respects raised the standard. But modern languages, while they have become more exacting in their demands, are in many ways not so well furnished with powers of expression as the ancient classical ones.

Such are a few of the difficulties which have to be overcome in the work of translation; and we are far from having exhausted the list. (6). The excellence of a translation will consist, not merely in the faithful rendering of words, or in the composition of a sentence only, or yet of a single paragraph, but in the colour and style

of the whole work. Equability of tone is best attained by the exclusive use of familiar and idiomatic words. But great care must be taken; for an idiomatic phrase, if an exception to the general style, is of itself a disturbing element. No word, however expressive and exact, should be employed, which makes the reader stop to think, or unduly attracts attention by difficulty and peculiarity, or disturbs the effect of the surrounding language. In general the style of one author is not appropriate to another; as in society, so in letters, we expect every man to have 'a good coat of his own,' and not to dress himself out in the rags of another. (*a*) Archaic expressions are therefore to be avoided. Equivalents may be occasionally drawn from Shakspere, who is the common property of us all; but they must be used sparingly. For, like some other men of genius of the Elizabethan and Jacobean age, he outdid the capabilities of the language, and many of the expressions which he introduced have been laid aside and have dropped out of use. (*b*) A similar principle should be observed in the employment of Scripture. Having a greater force and beauty than other language, and a religious association, it disturbs the even flow of the style. It may be used to reproduce in the translation the quaint effect of some antique phrase in the original, but rarely; and when adopted, it should have a certain freshness and a suitable 'entourage.' It is strange to observe that the most effective use of Scripture phraseology arises out of the application of it in a sense not intended by the author. (*c*) Another caution: metaphors differ in different languages, and the translator will often be compelled to substitute one for another, or to paraphrase them, not giving word for word, but diffusing over several words the more concentrated

thought of the original. The Greek of Plato often goes beyond the English in its imagery: cp. Laws iii. 695 C, *ὧν καὶ νῦν ἔτι σμικρὰ ὀνείρατα λέλειπται*; Rep. i. 345 E; ix. 588 C, &c. Or again the modern word, which in substance is the nearest equivalent to the Greek, may be found to include associations alien to Greek life: e. g. *δικασταί*, 'jurymen,' *τὰ μέσα τῶν πολιτῶν*, 'the bourgeoisie.' (*d*) The translator has also to provide expressions for philosophical terms of very indefinite meaning in the more definite language of modern philosophy. And he must not allow discordant elements to enter into the work. For example, in translating Plato, it would equally be an anachronism to intrude on him the feeling and spirit of the Jewish or Christian Scriptures or the technical terms of the Hegelian or Darwinian philosophy.

(7). As no two words are precise equivalents (just as no two leaves of the forest are exactly similar), it is a mistaken attempt at precision always to translate the same Greek word by the same English word. There is no reason why in the New Testament *δικαιοσύνη* should always be rendered 'righteousness,' or *διαθήκη* 'covenant.' In such cases the translator may be allowed to employ two words — sometimes when the two meanings occur in the same passage, varying them by an 'or'— e. g. *ἐπιστήμη*, 'science' or 'knowledge,' *εἶδος*, 'idea' or 'class,' *σωφροσύνη*, 'temperance' or 'prudence,'— at the point where the change of meaning occurs. If translations are intended not for the Greek scholar but for the general reader, their worst fault will be that they sacrifice the general effect and meaning to the over-precise rendering of words and forms of speech.

(8). There is no kind of literature in English which corresponds to the Greek Dialogue; nor is the English

language easily adapted to it. The rapidity and abruptness of question and answer, the constant repetition of ἦ δ' ὅς, εἶπε, ἔφη, &c., which Cicero avoided in Latin (de Amicit. c. 1), the frequent occurrence of expletives, would, if reproduced in a translation, give offence to the reader. Greek has a freer and more frequent use of the Interrogative, and is of a more passionate and emotional character, and therefore lends itself with greater readiness to the dialogue form. Most of the so-called English Dialogues are but poor imitations of Plato, which fall very far short of the original. The breath of conversation, the subtle adjustment of question and answer, the lively play of fancy, the power of drawing characters, are wanting in them. But the Platonic Dialogue is a drama as well as a dialogue, of which Socrates is the central figure, and there are lesser performers as well:—the insolence of Thrasymachus, the anger of Callicles and Anytus, the patronizing style of Protagoras, the self-consciousness of Prodicus and Hippias, are all part of the entertainment. To reproduce this living image the same sort of effort is required as in translating poetry. The language, too, is of a finer quality; the mere prose English is slow in lending itself to the form of question and answer, and so the ease of conversation is lost, and at the same time the dialectical precision with which the steps of the argument are drawn out is apt to be impaired.

II. In the Introductions to the Dialogues there have been added some essays on modern philosophy, and on political and social life. The chief subjects discussed in these are Utility, Communism, the Kantian and Hegelian philosophies, Psychology, and the Origin of Language[1].

[1] There have been added also in the Third Edition remarks on other subjects. A list of the most important of these additions is given at the end of this Preface (see p. xxxviii).

Ancient and modern philosophy throw a light upon one another: but they should be compared, not confounded. Although the connexion between them is sometimes accidental, it is often real. The same questions are discussed by them under different conditions of language and civilization; but in some cases a mere word has survived, while nothing or hardly anything of the pre-Socratic, Platonic, or Aristotelian meaning is retained. There are other questions familiar to the moderns, which have no place in ancient philosophy. The world has grown older in two thousand years, and has enlarged its stock of ideas and methods of reasoning. Yet the germ of modern thought is found in ancient, and we may claim to have inherited, notwithstanding many accidents of time and place, the spirit of Greek philosophy. There is, however, no continuous growth of the one into the other, but a new beginning, partly artificial, partly arising out of the questionings of the mind itself, and also receiving a stimulus from the study of ancient writings.

Considering the great and fundamental differences which exist in ancient and modern philosophy, it seems best that we should at first study them separately, and seek for the interpretation of either, especially of the ancient, from itself only, comparing the same author with himself and with his contemporaries, and with the general state of thought and feeling prevalent in his age. Afterwards comes the remoter light which they cast on one another. We begin to feel that the ancients had the same thoughts as ourselves, the same difficulties which characterize all periods of transition, almost the same opposition between science and religion. Although we cannot maintain that ancient and modern philosophy are one and continuous (as has been affirmed with more truth

respecting ancient and modern history), for they are separated by an interval of a thousand years, yet they seem to recur in a sort of cycle, and we are surprised to find that the new is ever old, and that the teaching of the past has still a meaning for us.

III. In the preface to the first edition I expressed a strong opinion at variance with Mr. Grote's, that the so-called Epistles of Plato were spurious. His friend and editor, Professor Bain, thinks that I ought to give the reasons why I differ from so eminent an authority. Reserving the fuller discussion of the question for another place, I will shortly defend my opinion by the following arguments:—

(*a*) Because almost all epistles purporting to be of the classical age of Greek literature are forgeries[1]. Of all documents this class are the least likely to be preserved and the most likely to be invented. The ancient world swarmed with them; the great libraries stimulated the demand for them; and at a time when there was no regular publication of books, they easily crept into the world.

(*b*) When one epistle out of a number is spurious, the remainder of the series cannot be admitted to be genuine, unless there be some independent ground for thinking them so: when all but one are spurious, overwhelming evidence is required of the genuineness of the one: when they are all similar in style or motive, like witnesses who agree in the same tale, they stand or fall together. But no one, not even Mr. Grote, would maintain that all the Epistles of Plato are genuine, and very few critics think that more than one of them is so. And they are clearly all written from the same motive, whether serious or only literary. Nor is there an example in

[1] Compare Bentley's Works (Dyce's Edition), vol. ii. 136 foll., 222.

Greek antiquity of a series of Epistles, continuous and yet coinciding with a succession of events extending over a great number of years.

The external probability therefore against them is enormous, and the internal probability is not less: for they are trivial and unmeaning, devoid of delicacy and subtlety, wanting in a single fine expression. And even if this be matter of dispute, there can be no dispute that there are found in them many plagiarisms, inappropriately borrowed, which is a common note of forgery (compare 330 C foll. with Rep. iv. 425 E, 426 B, vi. 488 A: 347 E with Phaedrus 249 D: 326 A, B and 328 A with Rep. v. 473 C, D, &c.). They imitate Plato, who never imitates either himself or any one else; reminiscences of the Republic and the Laws are continually recurring in them; they are too like him and also too unlike him, to be genuine (*see especially* Karsten, Commentatio Critica de Platonis quae feruntur Epistolis, p. 111 foll.). They are full of egotism, self-assertion, affectation, faults which of all writers Plato was most careful to avoid, and into which he was least likely to fall (ib. p. 99 foll.). They abound in obscurities, irrelevancies, solecisms, pleonasms, inconsistencies (ib. p. 96 foll.), awkwardnesses of construction, wrong uses of words (ib. pp. 58, 59, 117, 121). They also contain historical blunders, such as the statement respecting Hipparinus and Nysaeus, the nephews of Dion (328 A), who are said to 'have been well inclined to philosophy, and well able to dispose the mind of their brother Dionysius in the same course,' at a time when they could not have been more than six or seven years of age — also foolish allusions, such as the comparison of the Athenian empire to the empire of Darius (332 A, B), which show a spirit very different from that of Plato; and

mistakes of fact, as e. g. about the Thirty Tyrants (p. 324 C), whom the writer of the letters seems to have confused with certain inferior magistrates, making them in all fifty-one. These palpable errors and absurdities are absolutely irreconcilable with their genuineness. And as they appear to have a common parentage, the more they are studied, the more they will be found to furnish evidence against themselves. The Seventh, which is thought to be the most important of these Epistles, has affinities with the Third and the Eighth, and is quite as impossible and inconsistent as the rest. It is therefore involved in the same condemnation.— The final conclusion is that neither the Seventh nor any other of them, when carefully analyzed, can be imagined to have proceeded from the hand or mind of Plato. The other testimonies to the voyages of Plato to Sicily and the court of Dionysius are all of them later by several centuries than the events to which they refer. No extant writer mentions them older than Cicero and Cornelius Nepos. It does not seem impossible that so attractive a theme as the meeting of a philosopher and a tyrant, once imagined by the genius of a sophist, may have passed into a romance which became famous in Hellas and the world. It may have created one of the mists of history, like the Trojan war or the legend of Arthur, which we are unable to penetrate. In the age of Cicero, and still more in that of Diogenes Laertius and Appuleius, many other legends had gathered around the personality of Plato,— more voyages, more journeys to visit tyrants and Pythagorean philosophers. But if, as we agree with Karsten in supposing, they are the forgery of some rhetorican or sophist, we cannot agree with him in also supposing that they are of any historical value, the rather as there is no early independent testimony by

which they are supported or with which they can be compared.

IV. There is another subject to which I must briefly call attention, lest I should seem to have overlooked it. Dr. Henry Jackson, of Trinity College, Cambridge, in a series of articles which he has contributed to the Journal of Philology (1881–6; Vol. x. 132–150, 253–293; xi. 287–331; xiii. 1–40; xiv. 173–230, extending to about 200 pages), has put forward an entirely new explanation of the Platonic 'Ideas.' He supposes that in the mind of Plato they took, at different times in his life, two essentially different forms:— an earlier one which is found chiefly in the Republic and the Phaedo, and a later, which appears in the Theaetetus, Philebus, Sophist, Politicus, Parmenides, Timaeus. In the first stage of his philosophy Plato attributed Ideas to all things, at any rate to all things which have classes or common notions: these he supposed to exist only by participation in them. In the later Dialogues he no longer included in them manufactured articles and ideas of relation, but restricted them to 'types of nature,' and having become convinced that the many cannot be parts of the one, for the idea of participation in them he substituted imitation of them (xi. 292). To quote Dr. Jackson's own expressions (x. 297),—'whereas in the period of the Republic and the Phaedo, it was proposed to pass through ontology to the sciences, in the period of the Parmenides and the Philebus, it is proposed to pass through the sciences to ontology': or, as he repeats in nearly the same words (xi. 320),—'whereas in the Republic and in the Phaedo he had dreamt of passing through ontology to the sciences, he is now content to pass through the sciences to ontology.'

This theory is supposed to be based on Aristotle's

Metaphysics (Book I. c. 6), a passage containing an account of the ideas, which hitherto scholars have found impossible to reconcile with the statements of Plato himself. The preparations for the new departure are discovered in the Parmenides and in the Theaetetus; and it is said to be expressed under a different form by the *πέρας* and the *ἄπειρον* of the Philebus (vol. x. 275 foll.). The *πέρας* of the Philebus is the principle which gives form and measure to the *ἄπειρον*; and in the 'Later Theory' is held to be the *πόσον* or *μέτριον* which converts the Infinite or Indefinite into ideas. They are neither *περαίνοντα* nor *ἄπειρα*, but belong to the *μικτὸν γένος* which partakes of both.

With great respect for the learning and ability of Dr. Jackson, I find myself unable to agree in this newly fashioned doctrine of the Ideas, which he ascribes to Plato. I have not the space to go into the question fully; but I will briefly state some objections which are, I think, fatal to it.

(1). First, the foundation of his argument is laid in the Metaphysics of Aristotle. But we cannot argue, either from the Metaphysics, or from any other of the philosophical treatises of Aristotle, to the dialogues of Plato until we have ascertained the relation in which his so-called works stand to the philosopher himself. There is of course no doubt of the great influence exercised upon Greece and upon the world by Aristotle and his philosophy. But on the other hand almost every one who is capable of understanding the subject acknowledges that his writings have not come down to us in an authentic form like most of the dialogues of Plato. How much of them is to be ascribed to Aristotle's own hand, how much is due to his successors in the Peripatetic School, is a question which has never been determined, and probably

never can be, because the solution of it depends upon internal evidence only. To 'the height of this great argument' I do not propose to ascend. But one little fact, not irrelevant to the present discussion, will show how hopeless is the attempt to explain Plato out of the writings of Aristotle. In the chapter of the Metaphysics quoted by Dr. Jackson (I. 6), about two octavo pages in length, there occur no less than seven or eight references to Plato, although nothing really corresponding to them can be found in his extant writings:—a small matter truly; but what a light does it throw on the character of the entire book in which they occur! We can hardly escape from the conclusion that they are not statements of Aristotle respecting Plato, but of a later generation of Aristotelians respecting a later generation of Platonists[1].

(2). There is no hint in Plato's own writings that he was conscious of having made any change in the Doctrine of Ideas such as Dr. Jackson attributes to him, although in the Republic the platonic Socrates speaks of 'a longer and a shorter way' (iv. 435; vi. 504), and of a way in which his disciple Glaucon 'will be unable to follow him' (vii. 533); also of a way of Ideas, to which he still holds fast, although it has often deserted him (Philebus 16 C, Phaedo 97–108), and although in the later dialogues and in the Laws the reference to Ideas disappears, and Mind claims her own (Phil. 31, 65; Laws xii. 965 B). No hint is given of what Plato meant by the 'longer way' (Rep. iv. 435 D), or 'the way in which Glaucon was unable to follow' (ib. vii. 533 A); or of the relation of Mind to the Ideas. It might be said with truth that the conception of the Idea predominates in the first half of the Dialogues, which, according

[1] Cp. the striking remark of the great Scaliger respecting the Magna Moralia: —*Haec non sunt Aristotelis, tamen utitur auctor Aristotelis nomine tanquam suo.*

to the order adopted in this work, ends with the Republic, the 'conception of Mind' and a way of speaking more in agreement with modern terminology, in the latter half. But there is no reason to suppose that Plato's theory, or, rather, his various theories, of the Ideas underwent any definite change during his period of authorship. They are substantially the same in the twelfth Book of the Laws (962, 963 foll.) as in the Meno and Phaedo; and since the Laws were written in the last decade of his life, there is no time to which this change of opinions can be ascribed. It is true that the theory of Ideas takes several different forms, not merely an earlier and a later one, in the various Dialogues. They are personal and impersonal, ideals and ideas, existing by participation or by imitation, one and many, in different parts of his writings or even in the same passage (cp. Vol. II. p. 13 foll.). They are the universal definitions of Socrates, and at the same time 'of more than mortal knowledge' (Rep. vi. 485). But they are always the negations of sense, of matter, of generation, of the particular: they are always the subjects of knowledge and not of opinion; and they tend, not to diversity, but to unity. Other entities or intelligences are akin to them, but not the same with them, such as mind, measure, limit, eternity, essence (cp. Philebus *sub fin.*; Timaeus *passim*): these and similar terms appear to express the same truths from a different point of view, and to belong to the same sphere with them. But we are not justified, therefore, in attempting to identify them, any more than in wholly opposing them. The great oppositions of the sensible and intellectual, the unchangeable and the transient, in whatever form of words expressed, are always maintained in Plato. But the lesser logical distinctions, as we should call them, whether of ontology or predication,

which troubled the pre-Socratic philosophy and came to the front in Aristotle, are variously discussed and explained. Thus far we admit inconsistency in Plato, but no further. He lived in an age before logic and system had wholly permeated language, and therefore we must not always expect to find in him systematic arrangement or logical precision:—'*poema magis putandum.*' But he is always true to his own context, the careful study of which is of more value to the interpreter than all the commentators and scholiasts put together.

(3). The conclusions at which Dr. Jackson has arrived are such as might be expected to follow from his method of procedure. For he takes words without regard to their connexion, and pieces together different parts of dialogues in a purely arbitrary manner, although there is no indication that the author intended the two passages to be so combined, or that when he appears to be experimenting on the different points of view from which a subject of philosophy may be regarded, he is secretly elaborating a system. By such a use of language any premises may be made to lead to any conclusion. I am not one of those who believe Plato to have been a mystic or to have had hidden meanings; nor do I agree with Dr. Jackson in thinking that 'when he is precise and dogmatic, he generally contrives to introduce an element of obscurity into the exposition' (J. of Philol. x. 150). The great master of language wrote as clearly as he could in an age when the minds of men were clouded by controversy, and philosophical terms had not yet acquired a fixed meaning. I have just said that Plato is to be interpreted by his context; and I do not deny that in some passages, especially in the Republic and Laws, the context is at a greater distance than would be allowable in a modern

writer. But we are not therefore justified in connecting passages from different parts of his writings, or even from the same work, which he has not himself joined. We cannot argue from the Parmenides to the Philebus, or from either to the Sophist, or assume that the Parmenides, the Philebus, and the Timaeus were 'written simultaneously,' or 'were intended to be studied in the order in which they are here named' (J. of Philol. xiii. 38). We have no right to connect statements which are only accidentally similar. Nor is it safe for the author of a theory about ancient philosophy to argue from what will happen if his statements are rejected. For those consequences may never have entered into the mind of the ancient writer himself; and they are very likely to be modern consequences which would not have been understood by him. 'I cannot think,' says Dr. Jackson, 'that Plato would have changed his opinions, but have nowhere explained the nature of the change.' But is it not much more improbable that he should have changed his opinions, and not stated in an unmistakable manner that the most essential principle of his philosophy had been reversed? It is true that a few of the dialogues, such as the Republic and the Timaeus, or the Theaetetus and the Sophist, or the Meno and the Apology, contain allusions to one another. But these allusions are superficial and, except in the case of the Republic and the Laws, have no philosophical importance. They do not affect the substance of the work. It may be remarked further that several of the dialogues, such as the Phaedrus, the Sophist, and the Parmenides, have more than one subject. But it does not therefore follow that Plato intended one dialogue to succeed another, or that he begins anew in one dialogue a subject which he has left unfinished in

another, or that even in the same dialogue he always intended the two parts to be connected with each other. We cannot argue from a casual statement found in the Parmenides to other statements which occur in the Philebus. Much more truly is his own manner described by himself when he says that 'words are more plastic than wax' (Rep. ix. 588 C), and 'whither the wind blows, the argument follows' (ib. iii. 394 D). The dialogues of Plato are like poems, isolated and separate works, except where they are indicated by the author himself to have an intentional sequence.

It is this method of taking passages out of their context and placing them in a new connexion when they seem to confirm a preconceived theory, which is the defect of Dr. Jackson's procedure. It may be compared, though not wholly the same with it, to that method which the Fathers practised, sometimes called 'the mystical interpretation of Scripture,' in which isolated words are separated from their context, and receive any sense which the fancy of the interpreter may suggest. It is akin to the method employed by Schleiermacher of arranging the dialogues of Plato in chronological order according to what he deems the true arrangement of the ideas contained in them. (Dr. Jackson is also inclined, having constructed a theory, to make the chronology of Plato's writings dependent upon it[1].) It may likewise be illustrated by the ingenuity of those who employ symbols to find in Shakspere a hidden meaning. In the three cases the error is nearly the same:— words are taken out of their natural context, and thus become destitute of any real meaning.

(4). According to Dr. Jackson's 'Later Theory,' Plato's Ideas, which were once regarded as the *summa genera* of

[1] See J. of Philol. xiii. 38, and elsewhere.

all things, are now to be explained as Forms or Types of some things only,—that is to say, of natural objects: these we conceive imperfectly, but are always seeking in vain to have a more perfect notion of them. He says (J. of Philol. xi. 319) that 'Plato hoped by the study of a series of hypothetical or provisional classifications to arrive at one in which nature's distribution of kinds is approximately represented, and so to attain approximately to the knowledge of the ideas. But whereas in the Republic, and even in the Phaedo, though less hopefully, he had sought to convert his provisional definitions into final ones by tracing their connexion with the *summum genus*, the *ἀγαθόν*, in the Parmenides his aspirations are less ambitious,' and so on. But where does Dr. Jackson find any such notion as this in Plato or anywhere in ancient philosophy? Is it not an anachronism, gracious to the modern physical philosopher, and the more acceptable because it seems to form a link between ancient and modern philosophy, and between physical and metaphysical science; but really unmeaning?

(5). To this 'Later Theory' of Plato's Ideas I oppose the authority of Professor Zeller, who affirms that none of the passages to which Dr. Jackson appeals (Theaet. 185 C foll.; Phil. 25 B foll.; Tim. 57 C; Parm. 130 B foll., 142 B–155 E, 157 B–159 E) 'in the smallest degree prove his point'; and that in the second class of dialogues, in which the 'Later Theory of Ideas' is supposed to be found, quite as clearly as in the first, are admitted Ideas, not only of natural objects, but of properties, relations, works of art, negative notions (Theaet. 176 E; Parm. 130 B foll.; Soph. 254 B foll., 258 B); and that what Dr. Jackson distinguishes as the first class of dialogues from the second equally assert or imply that the relation of things to the Ideas, is one of

participation in them as well as of imitation of them (Prof. Zeller's summary of his own review of Dr. Jackson, Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie, Vol. I, Berlin, 1888, pp. 617, 618).

In conclusion I may remark that in Plato's writings there is both unity, and also growth and development; but that we must not intrude upon him either a system or a technical language.

BALLIOL COLLEGE,
October, 1891.

NOTE.

The chief additions to the Introductions in the Third Edition consist of Essays on the following subjects:—

(1)	Language	Vol. I, 295–321.
(2)	The decline of Greek Literature .	" 424–429.
(3)	The 'Ideas' of Plato and Modern Philosophy	Vol. II, 12–25.
(4)	The myths of Plato	" 316–324.
(5)	The relation of the Republic, Statesman and Laws	Vol. III, ccxi–ccxvii.
(6)	The legend of Atlantis . . .	" 429–433.
(7)	Psychology	Vol. IV, 175–191.
(8)	Comparison of the Laws of Plato with Spartan and Athenian Laws and Institutions	Vol. V, ccxiii–ccxxxvi.

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CHARMIDES.

INTRODUCTION.

Charmides.

THE subject of the Charmides is Temperance or *σωφροσύνη*, a peculiarly Greek notion, which may also be rendered Moderation[1], Modesty, Discretion, Wisdom, without completely exhausting by all these terms the various associations of the word. It may be described as 'mens sana in corpore sano,' the harmony or due proportion of the higher and lower elements of human nature which 'makes a man his own master,' according to the definition of the Republic (iv. 430 E). In the accompanying translation the word has been rendered in different places either Temperance or Wisdom, as the connection seemed to require: for in the philosophy of Plato *σωφροσύνη* still retains an intellectual element (as Socrates is also said to have identified *σωφροσύνη* with *σοφία*: Xen. Mem. iii. 9, 4), and is not yet relegated to the sphere of moral virtue, as in the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle (iii. 10).

Analysis.

Steph. The beautiful youth, Charmides, who is also the most temperate
159 of human beings, is asked by Socrates, 'What is Temperance?'
160 He answers characteristically, (1) 'Quietness.' 'But Temperance is a fine and noble thing; and quietness in many or most cases is not so fine a thing as quickness.' He tries again and says (2) that temperance is modesty. But this again is set aside by a sophistical
161 application of Homer: for temperance is good as well as noble, and Homer has declared that 'modesty is not good for a needy man.' (3) Once more Charmides makes the attempt. This time
162 he gives a definition which he has heard, and of which Socrates conjectures that Critias must be the author: 'Temperance is doing one's own business.' But the artisan who makes another man's shoes may be temperate, and yet he is not doing his own business; and temperance defined thus would be opposed to the

1 Cp. Cic. Tusc. iii. 8, 16, '*σωφροσύνη*, quam soleo equidem tum temperantiam, tum moderationem appellare, nonnunquam etiam modestiam: ' foll.

Charmides. ANALYSIS.

division of labour which exists in every temperate or well-ordered state. How is this riddle to be explained?

Critias, who takes the place of Charmides, distinguishes in his answer between 'making' and 'doing,' and with the help of a misapplied quotation from Hesiod assigns to the words 'doing' and 'work' an exclusively good sense: Temperance is doing one's own business; — (4) is doing good. 163

Still an element of knowledge is wanting which Critias is readily induced to admit at the suggestion of Socrates; and, in the spirit of Socrates and of Greek life generally, proposes as a fifth definition, (5) Temperance is self-knowledge. But all sciences have a subject: number is the subject of arithmetic, health of medicine — what is the subject of temperance or wisdom? The answer is that (6) Temperance is the knowledge of what a man knows and of what he does not know. But this is contrary to analogy; there is no vision of vision, but only of visible things; no love of loves, but only of beautiful things; how then can there be a knowledge of knowledge? That which is older, heavier, lighter, is older, heavier, and lighter than something else, not than itself, and this seems to be true of all relative notions — the object of relation is outside of them; at any rate they can only have relation to themselves in the form of that object. Whether there are any such cases of reflex relation or not, and whether that sort of knowledge which we term Temperance is of this reflex nature, has yet to be determined by the great metaphysician. But even if knowledge can know itself, how does the knowledge of what we know imply the knowledge of what we do not know? Besides, knowledge is an abstraction only, and will not inform us of any particular subject, such as medicine, building, and the like. It may tell us that we or other men know something, but can never tell us what we know. 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171

Admitting that there is a knowledge of what we know and of what we do not know, which would supply a rule and measure of all things, still there would be no good in this; and the knowledge which temperance gives must be of a kind which will do us good; for temperance is a good. But this universal knowledge does not tend to our happiness and good: the only kind of knowledge which brings happiness is the knowledge of good and evil. To this Critias replies that the science or knowledge of good and evil, and 172 173 174

all the other sciences, are regulated by the higher science or knowledge of knowledge. Socrates replies by again parting off the concrete from the abstract, and asks how this knowledge conduces to happiness in the same definite way in which medicine conduces
175 to health.

Charmides.

ANALYSIS.

And now, after making all these concessions, which are really inadmissible, we are still as far as ever from ascertaining the nature of temperance, which Charmides already possesses, and
176 had therefore better rest in the knowledge that the more temperate he is the happier he will be, and not trouble himself with the speculations of Socrates.

In this Dialogue may be noted (1) The Greek ideal of beauty and goodness, the vision of the fair soul in the fair body, realised in the beautiful Charmides; (2) The true conception of medicine as a science of the whole as well as the parts, and of the mind as well as the body, which is playfully intimated in the story of the Thracian; (3) The tendency of the age to verbal distinctions, which here, as in the Protagoras and Cratylus, are ascribed to the ingenuity of Prodicus; and to interpretations or rather parodies of Homer or Hesiod, which are eminently characteristic of Plato and his contemporaries; (4) The germ of an ethical principle contained in the notion that temperance is 'doing one's own business,' which in the Republic (such is the shifting character of the Platonic philosophy) is given as the definition, not of temperance, but of justice; (5) The impatience which is exhibited by Socrates of any definition of temperance in which an element of science or knowledge is not included; (6) The beginning of metaphysics and logic implied in the two questions: whether there can be a science of science, and whether the knowledge of what you know is the same as the knowledge of what you do not know; and also in the distinction between 'what you know' and 'that you know,' *ἃ οἶδεν* and *ὅτι οἶδεν*; here too is the first conception of an absolute self-determined science (the claims of which, however, are disputed by Socrates, who asks *cui bono?*) as well as the first suggestion of the difficulty of the abstract and concrete, and one of the earliest anticipations of the relation of subject and object, and of the subjective element in knowledge — a 'rich banquet' of metaphysical questions in which we 'taste of many

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things' (Rep. i. 354). (7) And still the mind of Plato, having snatched for a moment at these shadows of the future, quickly rejects them: thus early has he reached the conclusion that there can be no science which is a 'science of nothing' (Parm. 132 B). (8) The conception of a science of good and evil also first occurs here, an anticipation of the Philebus and Republic as well as of moral philosophy in later ages.

The dramatic interest of the Dialogue chiefly centres in the youth Charmides, with whom Socrates talks in the kindly spirit of an elder. His childlike simplicity and ingenuousness are contrasted with the dialectical and rhetorical arts of Critias, who is the grown-up man of the world, having a tincture of philosophy. No hint is given, either here or in the Timaeus, of the infamy which attaches to the name of the latter in Athenian history. He is simply a cultivated person who, like his kinsman Plato, is ennobled by the connection of his family with Solon (cp. Tim. 20, 21), and had been the follower, if not the disciple, both of Socrates and of the Sophists. In the argument he is not unfair, if allowance is made for a slight rhetorical tendency, and for a natural desire to save his reputation with the company; he is sometimes nearer the truth than Socrates. Nothing in his language or behaviour is unbecoming the guardian of the beautiful Charmides. His love of reputation is characteristically Greek, and contrasts with the humility of Socrates. Nor in Charmides himself do we find any resemblance to the Charmides of history, except, perhaps, the modest and retiring nature which, according to Xenophon, at one time of his life prevented him from speaking in the Assembly (Mem. 3, 7); and we are surprised to hear that, like Critias, he afterwards became one of the thirty tyrants. In the Dialogue he is a pattern of virtue, and is therefore in no need of the charm which Socrates is unable to apply. With youthful *naïveté*, keeping his secret and entering into the spirit of Socrates, he enjoys the detection of his elder and guardian Critias, who is easily seen to be the author of the definition which he has so great an interest in maintaining (262 B). The preceding definition, 'Temperance is doing one's own business,' is assumed to have been borrowed by Charmides from another; and when the inquiry becomes more abstract he is superseded by Critias (cp. Theaet. 168 E; Euthyd. 290 E). Socrates preserves his accustomed irony to the end; he

is in the neighbourhood of several great truths, which he views in various lights, but always either by bringing them to the test of common sense, or by demanding too great exactness in the use of words, turns aside from them and comes at last to no conclusion.

The definitions of temperance proceed in regular order from the popular to the philosophical. The first two are simple enough and partially true, like the first thoughts of an intelligent youth; the third, which is a real contribution to ethical philosophy, is perverted by the ingenuity of Socrates, and hardly rescued by an equal perversion on the part of Critias. The remaining definitions have a higher aim, which is to introduce the element of knowledge, and at last to unite good and truth in a single science. But the time has not yet arrived for the realization of this vision of metaphysical philosophy; and such a science when brought nearer to us in the Philebus and the Republic will not be called by the name of *σωφροσύνη*. Hence we see with surprise that Plato, who in his other writings identifies good and knowledge, here opposes them, and asks, almost in the spirit of Aristotle, how can there be a knowledge of knowledge, and even if attainable, how can such a knowledge be of any use?

The difficulty of the Charmides arises chiefly from the two senses of the word *σωφροσύνη*, or temperance. From the ethical notion of temperance, which is variously defined to be quietness, modesty, doing our own business, the doing of good actions, the dialogue passes on to the intellectual conception of *σωφροσύνη*, which is declared also to be the science of self-knowledge, or of the knowledge of what we know and do not know, or of the knowledge of good and evil. The dialogue represents a stage in the history of philosophy in which knowledge and action were not yet distinguished. Hence the confusion between them, and the easy transition from one to the other. The definitions which are offered are all rejected, but it is to be observed that they all tend to throw a light on the nature of temperance, and that, unlike the distinction of Critias between *ποιεῖν*, *πράττειν*, *ἐργάζεσθαι*, none of them are merely verbal quibbles. It is implied that this question, although it has not yet received a solution in theory, has been already answered by Charmides himself, who has learned to practise the virtue of self-knowledge which philosophers are vainly trying to define in words. In a similar spirit we might say

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to a young man who is disturbed by theological difficulties, 'Do not trouble yourself about such matters, but only lead a good life;' and yet in either case it is not to be denied that right ideas of truth may contribute greatly to the improvement of character.

The reasons why the Charmides, Lysis, Laches have been placed together and first in the series of Platonic dialogues, are: (i) Their shortness and simplicity. The Charmides and the Lysis, if not the Laches, are of the same 'quality' as the Phaedrus and Symposium: and it is probable, though far from certain, that the slighter effort preceded the greater one. (ii) Their eristic, or rather Socratic character; they belong to the class called dialogues of search (*πειραστικαί*), which have no conclusion. (iii) The absence in them of certain favourite notions of Plato, such as the doctrine of recollection and of the Platonic ideas; the questions, whether virtue can be taught; whether the virtues are one or many. (iv) They have a want of depth, when compared with the dialogues of the middle and later period; and a youthful beauty and grace which are not found in the later ones. (v) Their resemblance to one another; in all the three boyhood has a great part. These reasons have various degrees of weight in determining their place in the catalogue of the Platonic writings, though they are not conclusive. No arrangement of the Platonic dialogues can be strictly chronological. The order which has been adopted is intended mainly for the convenience of the reader; at the same time, indications of the date supplied either by Plato himself or allusions found in the dialogues have not been lost sight of. Much may be said about this subject, but the results can only be probable; there are no materials which would enable us to attain to anything like certainty.

The relations of knowledge and virtue are again brought forward in the companion dialogues of the Lysis and Laches; and also in the Protagoras and Euthydemus. The opposition of abstract and particular knowledge in this dialogue may be compared with a similar opposition of ideas and phenomena which occurs in the Prologue to the Parmenides, but seems rather to belong to a later stage of the philosophy of Plato.

CHARMIDES, OR TEMPERANCE.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES, *who is the narrator.* CHARMIDES.
CHAEREPHON. CRITIAS.

SCENE:—The Palaestra of Taureas, which is near the Porch of the King Archon.

Steph. 153 YESTERDAY evening I returned from the army at Potidaea, and having been a good while away, I thought that I should like to go and look at my old haunts. So I went into the palaestra of Taureas, which is over against the temple adjoining the porch of the King Archon, and there I found a number of persons, most of whom I knew, but not all. My visit was unexpected, and no sooner did they see me entering than they saluted me from afar on all sides; and Chaerephon, who is a kind of madman, started up and ran to me, seizing my hand, and saying, How did you escape, Socrates?—(I should explain that an engagement had taken place at Potidaea not long before we came away, of which the news had only just reached Athens.)

Charmides. CHAEREPHON, SOCRATES.

Socrates, who has just returned to Athens, visits his old friends and tells them the news from the army at Potidaea.

You see, I replied, that here I am.

There was a report, he said, that the engagement was very severe, and that many of our acquaintance had fallen.

That, I replied, was not far from the truth.

I suppose, he said, that you were present.

I was.

Then sit down, and tell us the whole story, which as yet we have only heard imperfectly.

I took the place which he assigned to me, by the side of

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS, CHAEREPHON.

He proceeds to make enquiries about the state of philosophy and about the youth; and is told of the beautiful Charmides,

Critias the son of Callaeschrus, and when I had saluted him and the rest of the company, I told them the news from the army, and answered their several enquiries.

Then, when there had been enough of this, I, in my turn, began to make enquiries about matters at home—about the present state of philosophy, and about the youth. I asked whether any of them were remarkable for wisdom or beauty, or both. Critias, glancing at the door, invited my attention 154
to some youths who were coming in, and talking noisily to one another, followed by a crowd. Of the beauties, Socrates, he said, I fancy that you will soon be able to form a judgment. For those who are just entering are the advanced guard of the great beauty, as he is thought to be, of the day, and he is likely to be not far off himself.

Who is he, I said; and who is his father?

Charmides, he replied, is his name; he is my cousin, and the son of my uncle Glaucon: I rather think that you know him too, although he was not grown up at the time of your departure.

Certainly, I know him, I said, for he was remarkable even then when he was still a child, and I should imagine that by this time he must be almost a young man.

You will see, he said, in a moment what progress he has made and what he is like. He had scarcely said the word, when Charmides entered.

Now you know, my friend, that I cannot measure anything, and of the beautiful, I am simply such a measure as a white line is of chalk; for almost all young persons appear to be beautiful in my eyes. But at the moment, when I saw him coming in, I confess that I was quite astonished at his beauty and stature; all the world seemed to be enamoured of him; amazement and confusion reigned when he entered; and a troop of lovers followed him. That grown-up men like ourselves should have been affected in this way was not surprising, but I observed that there was the same feeling among the boys; all of them, down to the very least child, turned and looked at him, as if he had been a statue.

Chaerephon called me and said: What do you think of him, Socrates? Has he not a beautiful face?

Most beautiful, I said.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CHAEREPHON, CRITIAS.

But you would think nothing of his face, he replied, if you could see his naked form: he is absolutely perfect.

And to this they all agreed.

By Heracles, I said, there never was such a paragon, if he has only one other slight addition.

What is that? said Critias.

If he has a noble soul; and being of your house, Critias, he may be expected to have this.

He is as fair and good within, as he is without, replied Critias.

whose soul is as fair as his body.

Then, before we see his body, should we not ask him to show us his soul, naked and undisguised? he is just of an age at which he will like to talk.

155 That he will, said Critias, and I can tell you that he is a philosopher already, and also a considerable poet, not in his own opinion only, but in that of others.

That, my dear Critias, I replied, is a distinction which has long been in your family, and is inherited by you from Solon. But why do you not call him, and show him to us? for even if he were younger than he is, there could be no impropriety in his talking to us in the presence of you, who are his guardian and cousin.

Very well, he said; then I will call him; and turning to the attendant, he said, Call Charmides, and tell him that I want him to come and see a physician about the illness of which he spoke to me the day before yesterday. Then again addressing me, he added: He has been complaining lately of having a headache when he rises in the morning: now why should you not make him believe that you know a cure for the headache?

Why not, I said; but will he come?

He will be sure to come, he replied.

He himself presently appears, and a ludicrous scene ensues.

He came as he was bidden, and sat down between Critias and me. Great amusement was occasioned by every one pushing with might and main at his neighbour in order to make a place for him next to themselves, until at the two ends of the row one had to get up and the other was rolled over sideways. Now I, my friend, was beginning to feel awkward; my former bold belief in my powers of conversing with him had vanished. And when Critias told him that I was the

Charmides. person who had the cure, he looked at me in such an indescribable manner, and was just going to ask a question. And at that moment all the people in the palaestra crowded about us, and, O rare! I caught a sight of the inwards of his garment, and took the flame. Then I could no longer contain myself. I thought how well Cydias understood the nature of love, when, in speaking of a fair youth, he warns some one 'not to bring the fawn in the sight of the lion to be devoured by him,' for I felt that I had been overcome by a sort of wild-beast appetite. But I controlled myself, and when he asked me if I knew the cure of the headache, I answered, but with an effort, that I did know.

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

The feelings suggested to Socrates by the sight of him.

And what is it? he said.

The cure for the headache.

I replied that it was a kind of leaf, which required to be accompanied by a charm, and if a person would repeat the charm at the same time that he used the cure, he would be made whole; but that without the charm the leaf would be of no avail.

Then I will write out the charm from your dictation, he said. 156

With my consent? I said, or without my consent?

With your consent, Socrates, he said, laughing.

Very good, I said; and are you quite sure that you know my name?

I ought to know you, he replied, for there is a great deal said about you among my companions; and I remember when I was a child seeing you in company with my cousin Critias.

I am glad to find that you remember me, I said; for I shall now be more at home with you and shall be better able to explain the nature of the charm, about which I felt a difficulty before. For the charm will do more, Charmides, than only cure the headache. I dare say that you have heard eminent physicians say to a patient who comes to them with bad eyes, that they cannot cure his eyes by themselves, but that if his eyes are to be cured, his head must be treated; and then again they say that to think of curing the head alone, and not the rest of the body also, is the height of folly. And arguing in this way they apply their methods to the whole body, and try to treat and heal the whole and

The eyes, as physicians tell us, cannot be cured without the head, nor the head without the body;

the part together. Did you ever observe that this is what they say?

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

Yes, he said.

And they are right, and you would agree with them?

Yes, he said, certainly I should.

His approving answers reassured me, and I began by degrees to regain confidence, and the vital heat returned. Such, Charimdes, I said, is the nature of the charm, which I learned when serving with the army from one of the physicians of the Thracian king Zamolxis, who are said to be so skilful that they can even give immortality. This Thracian told me that in these notions of theirs, which I was just now mentioning, the Greek physicians are quite right as far as they go; but Zamolxis, he added, our king, who is also a god, says further, 'that as you ought not to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, or the head without the body, so neither ought you to attempt to cure the body without the soul; and this,' he said, 'is the reason why the cure of many diseases is unknown to the physicians of Hellas, because they are ignorant of the whole, which ought to be studied also; for the part can never be well unless the whole is well.' For all good and evil, whether in the body or in human nature, originates, as he declared, in the soul, and overflows from thence, as if from the head into
157 the eyes. And therefore if the head and body are to be well, you must begin by curing the soul; that is the first thing. And the cure, my dear youth, has to be effected by the use of certain charms, and these charms are fair words; and by them temperance is implanted in the soul, and where temperance is, there health is speedily imparted, not only to the head, but to the whole body. And he who taught me the cure and the charm at the same time added a special direction: 'Let no one,' he said, 'persuade you to cure the head, until he has first given you his soul to be cured by the charm. For this,' he said, 'is the great error of our day in the treatment of the human body, that physicians separate the soul from the body.' And he added with emphasis, at the same time making me swear to his words, 'Let no one, however rich, or noble, or fair, persuade you to give him the cure, without the charm.' Now I have sworn, and I must keep my oath, and therefore if you will allow me to apply the Thracian

nor the body without the soul.

Charmides. charm first to your soul, as the stranger directed, I will afterwards proceed to apply the cure to your head. But if not, I do not know what I am to do with you, my dear Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS, CHARMIDES.

Critias, when he heard this, said: The headache will be an unexpected gain to my young relation, if the pain in his head compels him to improve his mind: and I can tell you, Socrates, that Charmides is not only pre-eminent in beauty among his equals, but also in that quality which is given by the charm; and this, as you say, is temperance?

Yes, I said.

Then let me tell you that he is the most temperate of human beings, and for his age inferior to none in any quality.

Yes, I said, Charmides; and indeed I think that you ought to excel others in all good qualities; for if I am not mistaken there is no one present who could easily point out two Athenian houses, whose union would be likely to produce a better or nobler scion than the two from which you are sprung. There is your father's house, which is descended from Critias the son of Dropidas, whose family has been commemorated in the panegyrical verses of Anacreon, Solon, and many other poets, as famous for beauty and virtue and all other high fortune: and your mother's house is equally 158
distinguished; for your maternal uncle, Pyrilampes, is reputed never to have found his equal, in Persia at the court of the great king, or on the continent of Asia, in all the places to which he went as ambassador, for stature and beauty; that whole family is not a whit inferior to the other. Having such ancestors you ought to be first in all things, and, sweet son of Glaucon, your outward form is no dishonour to any of them. If to beauty you add temperance, and if in other respects you are what Critias declares you to be, then, dear Charmides, blessed art thou, in being the son of thy mother. And here lies the point; for if, as he declares, you have this gift of temperance already, and are temperate enough, in that case you have no need of any charms, whether of Zamolxis or of Abaris the Hyperborean, and I may as well let you have the cure of the head at once; but if you have not yet acquired this quality, I must use the charm before I give you the medicine. Please, therefore, to inform me whether you admit

The outward form of Charmides does no discredit to his great ancestors.

Has he temperance also?

the truth of what Critias has been saying;—have you or have you not this quality of temperance? *Charmides.*

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

Charmides blushed, and the blush heightened his beauty, for modesty is becoming in youth; he then said very ingenuously, that he really could not at once answer, either yes, or no, to the question which I had asked: For, said he, if I affirm that I am not temperate, that would be a strange thing for me to say of myself, and also I should give the lie to Critias, and many others who think as he tells you, that I am temperate: but, on the other hand, if I say that I am, I shall have to praise myself, which would be ill manners; and therefore I do not know how to answer you. The modest reply of Charmides.

I said to him: That is a natural reply, Charmides, and I think that you and I ought together to enquire whether you have this quality about which I am asking or not; and then you will not be compelled to say what you do not like; neither shall I be a rash practitioner of medicine: therefore, if you please, I will share the enquiry with you, but I will not press you if you would rather not.

There is nothing which I should like better, he said; and as far as I am concerned you may proceed in the way which you think best.

159 I think, I said, that I had better begin by asking you a question; for if temperance abides in you, you must have an opinion about her; she must give some intimation of her nature and qualities, which may enable you to form a notion of her. Is not that true? A question about temperance: What is it?

Yes, he said, that I think is true.

You know your native language, I said, and therefore you must be able to tell what you feel about this.

Certainly, he said.

In order, then, that I may form a conjecture whether you have temperance abiding in you or not, tell me, I said, what, in your opinion, is Temperance?

At first he hesitated, and was very unwilling to answer: then he said that he thought temperance was doing things orderly and quietly, such things for example as walking in the streets, and talking, or anything else of that nature. In a word, he said, I should answer that, in my opinion, temperance is quietness. First definition: Temperance is quietness.

Charmides. Are you right, Charmides? I said. No doubt some would affirm that the quiet are the temperate; but let us see whether these words have any meaning; and first tell me whether you would not acknowledge temperance to be of the class of the noble and good?

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

Yes.

But in many actions quickness is found to be better than quietness; e. g. writing, reading, running, etc

But which is best when you are at the writing-master's, to write the same letters quickly or quietly?

Quickly.

And to read quickly or slowly?

Quickly again.

And in playing the lyre, or wrestling, quickness or sharpness are far better than quietness and slowness?

Yes.

And the same holds in boxing and in the pancratium?

Certainly.

And in leaping and running and in bodily exercises generally, quickness and agility are good; slowness, and inactivity, and quietness, are bad?

That is evident.

Then, I said, in all bodily actions, not quietness, but the greatest agility and quickness, is noblest and best?

Yes, certainly.

And is temperance a good?

Yes.

Then, in reference to the body, not quietness, but quickness will be the higher degree of temperance, if temperance is a good?

True, he said.

And which, I said, is better—facility in learning, or difficulty in learning?

Facility.

Yes, I said; and facility in learning is learning quickly, and difficulty in learning is learning quietly and slowly?

True.

And is it not better to teach another quickly and energetically, rather than quietly and slowly?

Yes.

And which is better, to call to mind, and to remember, quickly and readily, or quietly and slowly?

Charmides.

The former.

160 And is not shrewdness a quickness or cleverness of the soul, and not a quietness? SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

True.

And is it not best to understand what is said, whether at the writing-master's or the music-master's, or anywhere else, not as quietly as possible, but as quickly as possible?

Yes.

And in the searchings or deliberations of the soul, not the quietest, as I imagine, and he who with difficulty deliberates and discovers, is thought worthy of praise, but he who does so most easily and quickly?

Quite true, he said.

And in all that concerns either body or soul, swiftness and activity are clearly better than slowness and quietness?

Clearly they are.

Temperance therefore is no more quietness than quickness.

Then temperance is not quietness, nor is the temperate life quiet,—certainly not upon this view; for the life which is temperate is supposed to be the good. And of two things, one is true,—either never, or very seldom, do the quiet actions in life appear to be better than the quick and energetic ones; or supposing that of the nobler actions, there are as many quiet, as quick and vehement: still, even if we grant this, temperance will not be acting quietly any more than acting quickly and energetically, either in walking or talking or in anything else; nor will the quiet life be more temperate than the unquiet, seeing that temperance is admitted by us to be a good and noble thing, and the quick have been shown to be as good as the quiet.

I think, he said, Socrates, that you are right.

Then once more, Charmides, I said, fix your attention, and look within; consider the effect which temperance has upon yourself, and the nature of that which has the effect. Think over all this, and, like a brave youth, tell me—What is temperance?

Second definition: Temperance is modesty.

After a moment's pause, in which he made a real manly effort to think, he said: My opinion is, Socrates, that temperance makes a man ashamed or modest, and that temperance is the same as modesty.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES, CRITIAS.

Very good, I said; and did you not admit, just now, that temperance is noble?

Yes, certainly, he said.

And the temperate are also good?

Yes.

And can that be good which does not make men good?

Certainly not.

And you would infer that temperance is not only noble, but also good?

That is my opinion. 161

But Homer says that modesty is not always good.

Well, I said; but surely you would agree with Homer when he says,

'Modesty is not good for a needy man'?

Yes, he said; I agree.

Then I suppose that modesty is and is not good?

Clearly.

But temperance, whose presence makes men only good, and not bad, is always good?

That appears to me to be as you say.

And the inference is that temperance cannot be modesty—if temperance is a good, and if modesty is as much an evil as a good?

Third definition: Temperance is doing our own business. Charmides had heard this from Critias, who denies that he said it.

All that, Socrates, appears to me to be true; but I should like to know what you think about another definition of temperance, which I just now remember to have heard from some one, who said, 'That temperance is doing our own business.' Was he right who affirmed that?

You monster! I said; this is what Critias, or some philosopher has told you.

Some one else, then, said Critias; for certainly I have not.

But what matter, said Charmides, from whom I heard this?

No matter at all, I replied; for the point is not who said the words, but whether they are true or not.

The terms of the definition are ambiguous.

There you are in the right, Socrates, he replied.

To be sure, I said; yet I doubt whether we shall ever be able to discover their truth or falsehood; for they are a kind of riddle.

What makes you think so? he said.

Charmides.

Because, I said, he who uttered them seems to me to have meant one thing, and said another. Is the scribe, for example, to be regarded as doing nothing when he reads or writes?

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

I should rather think that he was doing something.

And does the scribe write or read, or teach you boys to write or read, your own names only, or did you write your enemies' names as well as your own and your friends'?

As much one as the other.

And was there anything meddling or intemperate in this?

Certainly not.

Writing is doing; is writing your enemy's name doing your own business?

And yet if reading and writing are the same as doing, you were doing what was not your own business?

But they are the same as doing.

And the healing art, my friend, and building, and weaving, and doing anything whatever which is done by art,—these all clearly come under the head of doing?

Certainly.

Must a good citizen make his own coat, etc.?

And do you think that a state would be well ordered by a law which compelled every man to weave and wash his own coat, and make his own shoes, and his own flask and strigil,
162 and other implements, on this principle of every one doing and performing his own, and abstaining from what is not his own?

I think not, he said.

But, I said, a temperate state will be a well-ordered state.

Of course, he replied.

Then temperance, I said, will not be doing one's own business; not at least in this way, or doing things of this sort?

Clearly not.

Then, as I was just now saying, he who declared that temperance is a man doing his own business had another and a hidden meaning; for I do not think that he could have been such a fool as to mean this. Was he a fool who told you, Charmides?

Nay, he replied, I certainly thought him a very wise man.

Then I am quite certain that he put forth his definition as

Charmides. a riddle, thinking that no one would know the meaning of the words 'doing his own business.'

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES, CRITIAS.

I dare say, he replied.

And what is the meaning of a man doing his own business? Can you tell me?

Indeed, I cannot; and I should not wonder if the man himself who used this phrase did not understand what he was saying. Whereupon he laughed slyly, and looked at Critias.

The secret dissatisfaction of Critias,

Critias had long been showing uneasiness, for he felt that he had a reputation to maintain with Charmides and the rest of the company. He had, however, hitherto managed to restrain himself; but now he could no longer forbear, and I am convinced of the truth of the suspicion which I entertained at the time, that Charmides had heard this answer about temperance from Critias. And Charmides, who did not want to answer himself, but to make Critias answer, tried to stir him up. He went on pointing out that he had been refuted, at which Critias grew angry, and appeared, as I thought, inclined to quarrel with him; just as a poet might quarrel with an actor who spoiled his poems in repeating them; so he looked hard at him and said—

Do you imagine, Charmides, that the author of this definition of temperance did not understand the meaning of his own words, because you do not understand them?

Why, at his age, I said, most excellent Critias, he can hardly be expected to understand; but you, who are older, and have studied, may well be assumed to know the meaning of them; and therefore, if you agree with him, and accept his definition of temperance, I would much rather argue with you than with him about the truth or falsehood of the definition.

who maintains the definition against Socrates,

I entirely agree, said Critias, and accept the definition.

Very good, I said; and now let me repeat my question—Do you admit, as I was just now saying, that all craftsmen make or do something?

Yes.

And do they make or do their own business only, or that of 163
others also?

They make or do that of others also.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

And are they temperate, seeing that they make not for themselves or their own business only?

Why not? he said.

No objection on my part, I said, but there may be a difficulty on his who proposes as a definition of temperance, 'doing one's own business,' and then says that there is no reason why those who do the business of others should not be temperate.

and is quickly caught in contradictions by him.

Nay[1], said he; did I ever acknowledge that those who do the business of others are temperate? I said, those who make, not those who do.

What! I asked; do you mean to say that doing and making are not the same?

No more, he replied, than making or working are the same; thus much I have learned from Hesiod, who says that 'work is no disgrace.' Now do you imagine that if he had meant by working and doing such things as you were describing, he would have said that there was no disgrace in them—for example, in the manufacture of shoes, or in selling pickles, or sitting for hire in a house of ill-fame? That, Socrates, is not to be supposed: but I conceive him to have distinguished making from doing and work; and, while admitting that the making anything might sometimes become a disgrace, when the employment was not honourable, to have thought that work was never any disgrace at all. For things nobly and usefully made he called works; and such makings he called workings, and doings; and he must be supposed to have called such things only man's proper business, and what is hurtful, not his business: and in that sense Hesiod, and any other wise man, may be reasonably supposed to call him wise who does his own work.

He tries to save himself by new distinctions.

O Critias, I said, no sooner had you opened your mouth, than I pretty well knew that you would call that which is proper to a man, and that which is his own, good; and that the makings (*ποιήσεις*) of the good you would call doings (*πράξεις*), for I am no stranger to the endless distinctions which Prodicus draws about names. Now I have no objection to your giving names any signification which you please,

[1] The English reader has to observe that the word 'make' (*ποιεῖν*), in Greek, has also the sense of 'do' (*πράττειν*).

Charmides. SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

if you will only tell me what you mean by them. Please then to begin again, and be a little plainer. Do you mean that this doing or making, or whatever is the word which you would use, of good actions, is temperance?

I do, he said.

Then not he who does evil, but he who does good, is temperate?

Yes, he said; and you, friend, would agree.

No matter whether I should or not; just now, not what I think, but what you are saying, is the point at issue.

Fourth definition: Temperance is the doing of good actions.

Well, he answered; I mean to say, that he who does evil, and not good, is not temperate; and that he is temperate who does good, and not evil: for temperance I define in plain words to be the doing of good actions.

And you may be very likely right in what you are saying; 164
but I am curious to know whether you imagine that temperate men are ignorant of their own temperance?

M. Critias is forced by Socrates to admit that the temperate man does not always know himself to be acting temperately.

I do not think so, he said.

And yet were you not saying, just now, that craftsmen might be temperate in doing another's work, as well as in doing their own?

I was, he replied; but what is your drift?

I have no particular drift, but I wish that you would tell me whether a physician who cures a patient may do good to himself and good to another also?

I think that he may.

And he who does so does his duty?

Yes.

And does not he who does his duty act temperately or wisely?

Yes, he acts wisely.

But must the physician necessarily know when his treatment is likely to prove beneficial, and when not? or must the craftsman necessarily know when he is likely to be benefited, and when not to be benefited, by the work which he is doing?

I suppose not.

Then, I said, he may sometimes do good or harm, and not know what he is himself doing, and yet, in doing good, as you say, he has done temperately or wisely. Was not that your statement?

Charmides.

Yes.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

Then, as would seem, in doing good, he may act wisely or temperately, and be wise or temperate, but not know his own wisdom or temperance?

But Critias refuses to accept this conclusion. Temperance implies knowledge; and the famous Delphic inscription, 'Know thyself,' means only, 'Be temperate.'

But that, Socrates, he said, is impossible; and therefore if this is, as you imply, the necessary consequence of any of my previous admissions, I will withdraw them, rather than admit that a man can be temperate or wise who does not know himself; and I am not ashamed to confess that I was in error. For self-knowledge would certainly be maintained by me to be the very essence of knowledge, and in this I agree with him who dedicated the inscription, 'Know thyself!' at Delphi. That word, if I am not mistaken, is put there as a sort of salutation which the god addresses to those who enter the temple; as much as to say that the ordinary salutation of 'Hail!' is not right, and that the exhortation 'Be temperate!' would be a far better way of saluting one another. The notion of him who dedicated the inscription was, as I believe, that the god speaks to those who enter his temple, not as men speak; but, when a worshipper enters, the first word which he hears is 'Be temperate!' This, however, like a prophet he expresses in a sort of riddle, for 'Know thyself!' and 'Be temperate!' are the same, as I maintain, and as the letters imply [*σωφρόνει, γνῶθι σαυτόν*], and yet they may be easily mis-
165 understood; and succeeding sages who added 'Never too much,' or, 'Give a pledge, and evil is nigh at hand,' would appear to have so misunderstood them; for they imagined that 'Know thyself!' was a piece of advice which the god gave, and not his salutation of the worshippers at their first coming in; and they dedicated their own inscription under the idea that they too would give equally useful pieces of advice. Shall I tell you, Socrates, why I say all this? My object is to leave the previous discussion (in which I know not whether you or I are more right, but, at any rate, no clear result was attained), and to raise a new one in which I will attempt to prove, if you deny, that temperance is self-knowledge.

Fifth definition: Temperance is self-knowledge.

Yes, I said, Critias; but you come to me as though I professed to know about the questions which I ask, and as though I could, if I only would, agree with you[1]. Whereas the fact

[1] Reading, according to Heusde's conjecture, *ὁμολογήσοντός σοι.*

Charmides. is that I enquire with you into the truth of that which is advanced from time to time, just because I do not know; and when I have enquired, I will say whether I agree with you or ot. Please then to allow me time to reflect.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS. Reflect, he said.

But temperance is also a science of something. I am reflecting, I replied, and discover that temperance, or wisdom, if implying a knowledge of anything, must be a science, and a science of something.

Yes, he said; the science of itself.

Is not medicine, I said, the science of health?

True.

And suppose, I said, that I were asked by you what is the use or effect of medicine, which is this science of health, I should answer that medicine is of very great use in producing health, which, as you will admit, is an excellent effect.

Granted.

What then is the result of it? And if you were to ask me, what is the result or effect of architecture, which is the science of building, I should say houses, and so of other arts, which all have their different results. Now I want you, Critias, to answer a similar question about temperance, or wisdom, which, according to you, is the science of itself. Admitting this view, I ask of you, what good work, worthy of the name wise, does temperance or wisdom, which is the science of itself, effect? Answer me.

No material result any more than in the abstract sciences. That is not the true way of pursuing the enquiry, Socrates, he said; for wisdom is not like the other sciences, any more than they are like one another: but you proceed as if they were alike. For tell me, he said, what result is there of computation or geometry, in the same sense as a house is the result of building, or a garment of weaving, or any other work of any other art? Can you show me any such result of 166
them? You cannot.

But still abstract sciences have a subject-matter. That is true, I said; but still each of these sciences has a subject which is different from the science. I can show you that the art of computation has to do with odd and even numbers in their numerical relations to themselves and to each other. Is not that true?

Yes, he said.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

And the odd and even numbers are not the same with the art of computation?

They are not.

The art of weighing, again, has to do with lighter and heavier; but the art of weighing is one thing, and the heavy and the light another. Do you admit that?

Yes.

Now, I want to know, what is that which is not wisdom, and of which wisdom is the science?

Temperance or wisdom is defined to be the science of other sciences, and of itself.

You are just falling into the old error, Socrates, he said. You come asking in what wisdom or temperance differs from the other sciences, and then you try to discover some respect in which they are alike; but they are not, for all the other sciences are of something else, and not of themselves; wisdom alone is a science of other sciences, and of itself. And of this, as I believe, you are very well aware: and that you are only doing what you denied that you were doing just now, trying to refute me, instead of pursuing the argument.

Personalities are beginning, to which Socrates quickly puts an end.

And what if I am? How can you think that I have any other motive in refuting you but what I should have in examining into myself? which motive would be just a fear of my unconsciously fancying that I knew something of which I was ignorant. And at this moment I pursue the argument chiefly for my own sake, and perhaps in some degree also for the sake of others who are my friends. For is not the discovery of things as they truly are, a good common to all mankind?

Yes, certainly, Socrates, he said.

Then, I said, be cheerful, sweet sir, and give your opinion in answer to the question which I asked, never minding whether Critias or Socrates is the person refuted; attend only to the argument, and see what will come of the refutation.

I think that you are right, he replied; and I will do as you say.

A difficulty: A science of itself and other sciences must also be a science of the absence of science.

Tell me, then, I said, what you mean to affirm about wisdom.

I mean to say that wisdom is the only science which is the science of itself as well as of the other sciences.

But the science of science, I said, will also be the science of the absence of science.

Charmides

Very true, he said.

SOCRATES. CRITIAS.

Then the wise or temperate man, and he only, will know 167
himself, and be able to examine what he knows or does not know, and to see what others know and think that they know and do really know; and what they do not know, and fancy that they know, when they do not. No other person will be able to do this. And this is wisdom and temperance and self-knowledge—for a man to know what he knows, and what he does not know. That is your meaning?

Yes, he said.

Now then, I said, making an offering of the third or last argument to Zeus the Saviour, let us begin again, and ask, in the first place, whether it is or is not possible for a person to know that he knows and does not know what he knows and does not know; and in the second place, whether, if perfectly possible, such knowledge is of any use.

That is what we have to consider, he said.

And here, Critias, I said, I hope that you will find a way out of a difficulty into which I have got myself. Shall I tell you the nature of the difficulty?

By all means, he replied.

Does not what you have been saying, if true, amount to this: that there must be a single science which is wholly a science of itself and of other sciences, and that the same is also the science of the absence of science?

Yes.

But is this conceivable?

But consider how monstrous this proposition is, my friend: in any parallel case, the impossibility will be transparent to you.

How so? and in what cases do you mean?

In such cases as this: Suppose that there is a kind of vision which is not like ordinary vision, but a vision of itself and of other sorts of vision, and of the defect of them, which in seeing sees no colour, but only itself and other sorts of vision: Do you think that there is such a kind of vision?

Certainly not.

Or is there a kind of hearing which hears no sound at all, but only itself and other sorts of hearing, or the defects of them?

There is not.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

Or take all the senses: can you imagine that there is any sense of itself and of other senses, but which is incapable of perceiving the objects of the senses?

I think not.

It is not supported by the analogy of sense or of the affections;

Could there be any desire which is not the desire of any pleasure, but of itself, and of all other desires?

Certainly not.

Or can you imagine a wish which wishes for no good, but only for itself and all other wishes?

I should answer, No.

Or would you say that there is a love which is not the love of beauty, but of itself and of other loves?

I should not.

168 Or did you ever know of a fear which fears itself or other fears, but has no object of fear?

I never did, he said.

Or of an opinion which is an opinion of itself and of other opinions, and which has no opinion on the subjects of opinion in general?

Certainly not.

But surely we are assuming a science of this kind, which, having no subject-matter, is a science of itself and of the other sciences?

Yes, that is what is affirmed.

But how strange is this, if it be indeed true: we must not however as yet absolutely deny the possibility of such a science; let us rather consider the matter.

You are quite right.

and involves a contradiction in the case of comparative terms.

Well then, this science of which we are speaking is a science of something, and is of a nature to be a science of something?

Yes.

Just as that which is greater is of a nature to be greater than something else[1]?

[1] Socrates is intending to show that science differs from the object of science, as any other relative differs from the object of relation. But where there is comparison—greater, less, heavier, lighter, and the like—a relation to self as well as to other things involves an absolute contradiction; and in other cases, as in the case of the senses, is hardly conceivable. The use of the genitive after the comparative in Greek, *μεῖζόν τινος*, creates an unavoidable obscurity in the translation.

Charmides. Yes.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS. Which is less, if the other is conceived to be greater?

To be sure.

And if we could find something which is at once greater than itself, and greater than other great things, but not greater than those things in comparison of which the others are greater, then that thing would have the property of being greater and also less than itself?

That, Socrates, he said, is the inevitable inference.

Or if there be a double which is double of itself and of other doubles, these will be halves; for the double is relative to the half?

That is true.

And that which is greater than itself will also be less, and that which is heavier will also be lighter, and that which is older will also be younger: and the same of other things; that which has a nature relative to self will retain also the nature of its object: I mean to say, for example, that hearing is, as we say, of sound or voice. Is that true?

Yes.

Then if hearing hears itself, it must hear a voice; for there is no other way of hearing.

Certainly.

And sight also, my excellent friend, if it sees itself must see a colour, for sight cannot see that which has no colour.

No.

The relation to self generally incredible and hardly ever certain.

Do you remark, Critias, that in several of the examples which have been recited the notion of a relation to self is altogether inadmissible, and in other cases hardly credible—inadmissible, for example, in the case of magnitudes, numbers, and the like?

Very true.

But in the case of hearing and sight, or in the power of self-motion, and the power of heat to burn, this relation to self will be regarded as incredible by some, but perhaps not 169
by others. And some great man, my friend, is wanted, who will satisfactorily determine for us, whether there is nothing which has an inherent property of relation to self, or some things only and not others; and whether in this class of self-related things, if there be such a class, that science which

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

is called wisdom or temperance is included. I altogether distrust my own power of determining these matters: I am not certain whether there is such a science of science at all; and even if there be, I should not acknowledge this to be wisdom or temperance, until I can also see whether such a science would or would not do us any good; for I have an impression that temperance is a benefit and a good. And therefore, O son of Callaeschrus, as you maintain that temperance or wisdom is a science of science, and also of the absence of science, I will request you to show in the first place, as I was saying before, the possibility, and in the second place, the advantage, of such a science; and then perhaps you may satisfy me that you are right in your view of temperance.

Critias heard me say this, and saw that I was in a difficulty; and as one person when another yawns in his presence catches the infection of yawning from him, so did he seem to be driven into a difficulty by my difficulty. But as he had a reputation to maintain, he was ashamed to admit before the company that he could not answer my challenge or determine the question at issue; and he made an unintelligible attempt to hide his perplexity. In order that the argument might proceed, I said to him, Well then, Critias, if you like, let us assume that there is this science of science; whether the assumption is right or wrong may hereafter be investigated. Admitting the existence of it, will you tell me how such a science enables us to distinguish what we know or do not know, which, as we were saying, is self-knowledge or wisdom: so we were saying?

A knowledge of knowledge or a knowledge of self can

Yes, Socrates, he said; and that I think is certainly true: for he who has this science or knowledge which knows itself will become like the knowledge which he has, in the same way that he who has swiftness will be swift, and he who has beauty will be beautiful, and he who has knowledge will know. In the same way he who has that knowledge which is self-knowing, will know himself.

I do not doubt, I said, that a man will know himself, when he possesses that which has self-knowledge: but what necessity is there that, having this, he should know what he knows and what he does not know?

Charmides. Because, Socrates, they are the same. 17

SOCRATES, CRITIAS. Very likely, I said; but I remain as stupid as ever; for still I fail to comprehend how this knowing what you know and do not know is the same as the knowledge of self.

What do you mean? he said.

never give us a knowledge of other things; for it is incapable of distinguishing them.

This is what I mean, I replied: I will admit that there is a science of science;—can this do more than determine that of two things one is and the other is not science or knowledge?

No, just that.

But is knowledge or want of knowledge of health the same as knowledge or want of knowledge of justice?

Certainly not.

The one is medicine, and the other is politics; whereas that of which we are speaking is knowledge pure and simple.

Very true.

And if a man knows only, and has only knowledge of knowledge, and has no further knowledge of health and justice, the probability is that he will only know that he knows something, and has a certain knowledge, whether concerning himself or other men.

True.

Then how will this knowledge or science teach him to know what he knows? Say that he knows health;—not wisdom or temperance, but the art of medicine has taught it to him;—and he has learned harmony from the art of music, and building from the art of building,—neither, from wisdom or temperance: and the same of other things.

That is evident.

The science or knowledge of knowledge is unmeaning and unprofitable.

How will wisdom, regarded only as a knowledge of knowledge or science of science, ever teach him that he knows health, or that he knows building?

It is impossible.

Then he who is ignorant of these things will only know that he knows, but not what he knows?

True.

Then wisdom or being wise appears to be not the knowledge of the things which we do or do not know, but only the knowledge that we know or do not know?

That is the inference.

Then he who has this knowledge will not be able to examine

whether a pretender knows or does not know that which he says that he knows: he will only know that he has a knowledge of some kind; but wisdom will not show him of what the knowledge is? *Charmides.* SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

Plainly not.

Neither will he be able to distinguish the pretender in medicine from the true physician, nor between any other true and false professor of knowledge. Let us consider the matter in this way: If the wise man or any other man wants to distinguish the true physician from the false, how will he proceed? He will not talk to him about medicine; and that, as we were saying, is the only thing which the physician understands.

True.

And, on the other hand, the physician knows nothing of science, for this has been assumed to be the province of wisdom.

True.

171 And further, since medicine is science, we must infer that he does not know anything of medicine.

Exactly.

Then the wise man may indeed know that the physician has some kind of science or knowledge; but when he wants to discover the nature of this he will ask, What is the subject-matter? For the several sciences are distinguished not by the mere fact that they are sciences, but by the nature of their subjects. Is not that true?

Quite true.

And medicine is distinguished from other sciences as having the subject-matter of health and disease?

Yes.

And he who would enquire into the nature of medicine must pursue the enquiry into health and disease, and not into what is extraneous?

True.

And he who judges rightly will judge of the physician as a physician in what relates to these?

He will.

He will consider whether what he says is true, and whether what he does is right, in relation to health and disease?

Charmides. He will.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS. But can any one attain the knowledge of either unless he have a knowledge of medicine?

He cannot.

No one at all, it would seem, except the physician can have this knowledge; and therefore not the wise man; he would have to be a physician as well as a wise man.

Very true.

This science of science and of the absence of science which has raised such great expectations in our minds is shown to be impossible.

Then, assuredly, wisdom or temperance, if only a science of science, and of the absence of science or knowledge, will not be able to distinguish the physician who knows from one who does not know but pretends or thinks that he knows, or any other professor of anything at all; like any other artist, he will only know his fellow in art or wisdom, and no one else.

That is evident, he said.

But then what profit, Critias, I said, is there any longer in wisdom or temperance which yet remains, if this is wisdom? If, indeed, as we were supposing at first, the wise man had known what he knew and what he did not know, and knew that he knew certain things and did not know others, and to recognize a similar faculty of discernment in others, there would certainly have been a great advantage in being wise; for then we should never have made a mistake, but have passed through life the unerring guides of ourselves and of those who are under us; and we should not have attempted to do what we did not know, but we should have found out those who knew, and have handed the business over to them and trusted in them; nor should we have allowed those who were under us to do anything which they were not likely to do well; and they would be likely to do well just that of which they had knowledge; and the house or state which was ordered or administered under the guidance of wisdom, and everything else of which wisdom was the lord, would have been well ordered; for truth guiding, and error having been eliminated, in all their doings, men would have done well, and would have been happy. Was not this, Critias, what we spoke of as the great advantage of wisdom—to know what is known and what is unknown to us? 172

Very true, he said.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

And now you perceive, I said, that no such science is to be found anywhere.

I perceive, he said.

Yet the *a priori* idea of knowledge may make it easier to learn something and to test the knowledge of others.

May we assume then, I said, that wisdom, viewed in this new light merely as a knowledge of knowledge and ignorance, has this advantage:—that he who possesses such knowledge will more easily learn anything which he learns; and that everything will be clearer to him, because, in addition to the knowledge of individuals, he sees the science, and this also will better enable him to test the knowledge which others have of what he knows himself; whereas the enquirer who is without this knowledge may be supposed to have a feebler and weaker insight? Are not these, my friend, the real advantages which are to be gained from wisdom? And are not we looking and seeking after something more than is to be found in her?

That is very likely, he said.

That is very likely, I said; and very likely, too, we have been enquiring to no purpose; as I am led to infer, because I observe that if this is wisdom, some strange consequences would follow. Let us, if you please, assume the possibility of this science of sciences, and further admit and allow, as was originally suggested, that wisdom is the knowledge of what we know and do not know. Assuming all this, still, upon further consideration, I am doubtful, Critias, whether wisdom, such as this, would do us much good. For we were wrong, I think, in supposing, as we were saying just now, that such wisdom ordering the government of house or state would be a great benefit.

How so? he said.

A doubt raised about the advantage of a science of sciences, even if it is assumed to be possible.

Why, I said, we were far too ready to admit the great benefits which mankind would obtain from their severally doing the things which they knew, and committing the things of which they are ignorant to those who were better acquainted with them.

Were we not right in making that admission?

I think not.

How very strange, Socrates!

By the dog of Egypt, I said, there I agree with you; and I was thinking as much just now when I said that strange

Charmides.
SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

consequences would follow, and that I was afraid we were on the wrong track; for however ready we may be to admit that this is wisdom, I certainly cannot make out what good 173
this sort of thing does to us.

What do you mean? he said; I wish that you could make me understand what you mean.

I dare say that what I am saying is nonsense, I replied; and yet if a man has any feeling of what is due to himself, he cannot let the thought which comes into his mind pass away unheeded and unexamined.

I like that, he said.

A dream of universal knowledge.

Hear, then, I said, my own dream; whether coming through the horn or the ivory gate, I cannot tell. The dream is this: Let us suppose that wisdom is such as we are now defining, and that she has absolute sway over us; then each action will be done according to the arts or sciences, and no one professing to be a pilot when he is not, or any physician or general, or any one else pretending to know matters of which he is ignorant, will deceive or elude us; our health will be improved; our safety at sea, and also in battle, will be assured; our coats and shoes, and all other instruments and implements will be skilfully made, because the workmen will be good and true. Aye, and if you please, you may suppose that prophecy, which is the knowledge of the future, will be under the control of wisdom, and that she will deter deceivers and set up the true prophets in their place as the revealers of the future. Now I quite agree that mankind, thus provided, would live and act according to knowledge, for wisdom would watch and prevent ignorance from intruding on us. But whether by acting according to knowledge we shall act well and be happy, my dear Critias,—this is a point which we have not yet been able to determine.

But the possession of all this knowledge will not necessarily give the knowledge of good and evil which can alone make men happy.

Yet I think, he replied, that if you discard knowledge, you will hardly find the crown of happiness in anything else.

But of what is this knowledge? I said. Just answer me that small question. Do you mean a knowledge of shoemaking?

God forbid.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CRITIAS.

Or of working in brass?

Certainly not.

Or in wool, or wood, or anything of that sort?

No, I do not.

Then, I said, we are giving up the doctrine that he who lives according to knowledge is happy, for these live according to knowledge, and yet they are not allowed by you to be happy; but I think that you mean to confine happiness to particular individuals who live according to knowledge, such
174 for example as the prophet, who, as I was saying, knows the future. Is it of him you are speaking or of some one else?

Yes, I mean him, but there are others as well.

Yes, I said, some one who knows the past and present as well as the future, and is ignorant of nothing. Let us suppose that there is such a person, and if there is, you will allow that he is the most knowing of all living men.

Certainly he is.

Yet I should like to know one thing more: which of the different kinds of knowledge makes him happy? or do all equally make him happy?

Not all equally, he replied.

But which most tends to make him happy? the knowledge of what past, present, or future thing? May I infer this to be the knowledge of the game of draughts?

Nonsense about the game of draughts.

Or of computation?

No.

Or of health?

Nearer the truth, he said.

And that knowledge which is nearest of all, I said, is the knowledge of what?

The knowledge with which he discerns good and evil.

Not universal knowledge, but the knowledge of good and evil, is really required by man.

Monster! I said; you have been carrying me round in a circle, and all this time hiding from me the fact that the life according to knowledge is not that which makes men act rightly and be happy, not even if knowledge include all the sciences, but one science only, that of good and evil. For, let me ask you, Critias, whether, if you take away this, medicine will not equally give health, and shoemaking equally produce shoes, and the art of the weaver clothes?—

Charmides. whether the art of the pilot will not equally save our lives at sea, and the art of the general in war?

SOCRATES, CRITIAS. Quite so.

Without this no other science can be of much avail. And yet, my dear Critias, none of these things will be well or beneficially done, if the science of the good be wanting.

True.

But that science is not wisdom or temperance, but a science of human advantage; not a science of other sciences, or of ignorance, but of good and evil: and if this be of use, then wisdom or temperance will not be of use.

This science of good or advantage is affirmed by Critias and denied by Socrates to be wisdom. And why, he replied, will not wisdom be of use? For, however much we assume that wisdom is a science of sciences, and has a sway over other sciences, surely she will have this particular science of the good under her control, and in this way will benefit us.

And will wisdom give health? I said; is not this rather the effect of medicine? Or does wisdom do the work of any of the other arts,—do they not each of them do their own work? Have we not long ago asseverated that wisdom is only the knowledge of knowledge and of ignorance, and of nothing else?

That is obvious.

Then wisdom will not be the producer of health.

Certainly not.

The art of health is different.

Yes, different.

Nor does wisdom give advantage, my good friend; for 175
that again we have just now been attributing to another art.

Very true.

How then can wisdom be advantageous, when giving no advantage?

That, Socrates, is certainly inconceivable.

Recapitulation: The argument says 'No' to all our definitions. You see then, Critias, that I was not far wrong in fearing that I could have no sound notion about wisdom; I was quite right in depreciating myself; for that which is admitted to be the best of all things would never have seemed to us useless, if I had been good for anything at an enquiry. But now I have been utterly defeated, and have failed to

discover what that is to which the imposer of names gave this name of temperance or wisdom. And yet many more admissions were made by us than could be fairly granted; for we admitted that there was a science of science, although the argument said No, and protested against us; and we admitted further, that this science knew the works of the other sciences (although this too was denied by the argument), because we wanted to show that the wise man had knowledge of what he knew and did not know; also we nobly disregarded, and never even considered, the impossibility of a man knowing in a sort of way that which he does not know at all; for our assumption was, that he knows that which he does not know; than which nothing, as I think, can be more irrational. And yet, after finding us so easy and good-natured, the enquiry is still unable to discover the truth; but mocks us to a degree, and has gone out of its way to prove the inutility of that which we admitted only by a sort of supposition and fiction to be the true definition of temperance or wisdom: which result, as far as I am concerned, is not so much to be lamented, I said. But for your sake, Charmides, I am very sorry—that you, having such beauty and such wisdom and temperance of soul, should have no profit or good in life from your wisdom and temperance. And still more am I grieved about the charm which I learned with so much pain, and to so little profit, from the Thracian, for the sake of a thing which is nothing worth. I think indeed that there is a mistake, and that I must be a bad enquirer, for wisdom or temperance I believe to be really a great good; and happy are you, Charmides, if you certainly
176 possess it. Wherefore examine yourself, and see whether you have this gift and can do without the charm; for if you can, I would rather advise you to regard me simply as a fool who is never able to reason out anything; and to rest assured that the more wise and temperate you are, the happier you will be.

Charmides.

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES.

Very likely Charmides has no need of the charm, and Socrates is a fool who is incapable of reasoning.

Charmides said: I am sure that I do not know, Socrates, whether I have or have not this gift of wisdom and temperance; for how can I know whether I have a thing, of which even you and Critias are, as you say, unable to discover the nature?—(not that I believe you.) And further, I am sure,

Nevertheless Charmides is desirous to be charmed.

Charmides. Socrates, that I do need the charm, and as far as I am concerned, I shall be willing to be charmed by you daily, until you say that I have had enough.

SOCRATES, CHARMIDES, CRITIAS.

Very good, Charmides, said Critias; if you do this I shall have a proof of your temperance, that is, if you allow yourself to be charmed by Socrates, and never desert him at all.

You may depend on my following and not deserting him, said Charmides: if you who are my guardian command me, I should be very wrong not to obey you.

And I do command you, he said.

Then I will do as you say, and begin this very day.

You sirs, I said, what are you conspiring about?

We are not conspiring, said Charmides, we have conspired already.

And are you about to use violence, without even going through the forms of justice?

Yes, I shall use violence, he replied, since he orders me; and therefore you had better consider well.

But the time for consideration has passed, I said, when violence is employed; and you, when you are determined on anything, and in the mood of violence, are irresistible.

Do not you resist me then, he said.

I will not resist you, I replied.

LYSIS.

INTRODUCTION.

Lysis.

No answer is given in the Lysis to the question, 'What is Friendship?' any more than in the Charmides to the question, 'What is Temperance?' There are several resemblances in the two Dialogues: the same youthfulness and sense of beauty pervades both of them; they are alike rich in the description of Greek life. The question is again raised of the relation of knowledge to virtue and good, which also recurs in the Laches; and Socrates appears again as the elder friend of the two boys, Lysis and Menexenus. In the Charmides, as also in the Laches, he is described as middle-aged; in the Lysis he is advanced in years.

Analysis.

The Dialogue consists of two scenes or conversations which seem to have no relation to each other. The first is a conversation between Socrates and Lysis, who, like Charmides, is an Athenian youth of noble descent and of great beauty, goodness, and intelli-
Steph. gence: this is carried on in the absence of Menexenus, who is
207 called away to take part in a sacrifice. Socrates asks Lysis whether his father and mother do not love him very much? 'To be sure they do.' 'Then of course they allow him to do exactly as he
208 likes.' 'Of course not: the very slaves have more liberty than he
209 has.' 'But how is this?' 'The reason is that he is not old enough.' 'No; the real reason is that he is not wise enough: for are there not some things which he is allowed to do, although he is not allowed to do others?' 'Yes, because he knows them, and does
210 not know the others.' This leads to the conclusion that all men everywhere will trust him in what he knows, but not in what he does not know; for in such matters he will be unprofitable to them, and do them no good. And no one will love him, if he does them no good; and he can only do them good by knowledge; and as he is still without knowledge, he can have as yet no conceit of knowledge. In this manner Socrates reads a lesson to Hippothales, the

Lysis. ANALYSIS.

foolish lover of Lysis, respecting the style of conversation which he should address to his beloved.

After the return of Menexenus, Socrates, at the request of Lysis, 211
asks him a new question: 'What is friendship? You, Menexenus, who have a friend already, can tell me, who am always longing to 212
find one, what is the secret of this great blessing.'

When one man loves another, which is the friend — he who loves, 213
or he who is loved? or are both friends? From the first of these suppositions they are driven to the second; and from the second to the third; and neither the two boys nor Socrates are satisfied with any of the three or with all of them. Socrates turns to the 214
poets, who affirm that God brings like to like (Homer), and to philosophers (Empedocles), who also assert that like is the friend of like. But the bad are not friends, for they are not even like themselves, and still less are they like one another. And the good have no need of one another, and therefore do not care about 215
one another. Moreover there are others who say that likeness is a cause of aversion, and unlikeness of love and friendship; and they too adduce the authority of poets and philosophers in support of their doctrines; for Hesiod says that 'potter is jealous of potter, bard of bard;' and subtle doctors tell us that 'moist is the 216
friend of dry, hot of cold,' and the like. But neither can their doctrine be maintained; for then the just would be the friend of the unjust, good of evil.

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that like is not the friend of like, nor unlike of unlike; and therefore good is not the friend of good, nor evil of evil, nor good of evil, nor evil of good. What remains but that the indifferent, which is neither good nor evil, should be the friend (not of the indifferent, for that would be 'like 217
the friend of like,' but) of the good, or rather of the beautiful?

But why should the indifferent have this attachment to the beautiful or good? There are circumstances under which such an attachment would be natural. Suppose the indifferent, say the human body, to be desirous of getting rid of some evil, such as disease, which is not essential but only accidental to it (for if the evil were essential the body would cease to be indifferent, and would become evil) — in such a case the indifferent becomes a 218
friend of the good for the sake of getting rid of the evil. In this intermediate 'indifferent' position the philosopher or lover of

wisdom stands: he is not wise, and yet not unwise, but he has ignorance accidentally clinging to him, and he yearns for wisdom as the cure of the evil. (Cp. Symp. 204.) *Lysis.* ANALYSIS.

After this explanation has been received with triumphant accord,
219 a fresh dissatisfaction begins to steal over the mind of Socrates: Must not friendship be for the sake of some ulterior end? and what can that final cause or end of friendship be, other than the good? But the good is desired by us only as the cure of evil; and
220 therefore if there were no evil there would be no friendship. Some other explanation then has to be devised. May not desire
221 be the source of friendship? And desire is of what a man wants and of what is congenial to him. But then the congenial cannot
222 be the same as the like; for like, as has been already shown, cannot be the friend of like. Nor can the congenial be the good; for good is not the friend of good, as has been also shown. The problem is unsolved, and the three friends, Socrates, Lysis, and Menexenus, are still unable to find out what a friend is.

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Thus, as in the Charmides and Laches, and several of the other Dialogues of Plato (compare especially the Protagoras and Theaetetus), no conclusion is arrived at. Socrates maintains his character of a 'know nothing;' but the boys have already learned the lesson which he is unable to teach them, and they are free from the conceit of knowledge. (Cp. Charm. pp. 175, 176.) The dialogue is what would be called in the language of Thrasyllus tentative or inquisitive. The subject is continued in the Phaedrus and Symposium, and treated, with a manifest reference to the Lysis, in the eighth and ninth books of the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle. As in other writings of Plato (for example, the Republic), there is a progress from unconscious morality, illustrated by the friendship of the two youths, and also by the sayings of the poets ('who are our fathers in wisdom' (214 A), and yet only tell us half the truth, and in this particular instance are not much improved upon by the philosophers), to a more comprehensive notion of friendship. This, however, is far from being cleared of its perplexity. Two notions appear to be struggling or balancing in the mind of Socrates: — First, the sense that friendship arises out of human needs and wants; Secondly, that the higher form or ideal of friendship exists only for the sake of the good. That friends are not necessarily either like or unlike, is also a truth confirmed by

experience. But the use of the terms 'like' or 'good' is too strictly limited; Socrates has allowed himself to be carried away by a sort of eristic or illogical logic against which no definition of friendship would be able to stand. In the course of the argument (217 D, E) he makes a distinction between property and accident which is a real contribution to the science of logic. Some higher truths appear through the mist. The manner in which the field of argument is widened, as in the Charmides and Laches by the introduction of the idea of knowledge, so here by the introduction of the good, is deserving of attention. The sense of the interdependence of good and evil, and the allusion to the possibility of the non-existence of evil, are also very remarkable.

The dialectical interest is fully sustained by the dramatic accompaniments. Observe, first, the scene, which is a Greek Palaestra, at a time when a sacrifice is going on, and the Hermaea are in course of celebration; secondly, the 'accustomed irony' of Socrates, who declares, as in the Symposium (177 D), that he is ignorant of all other things, but claims to have a knowledge of the mysteries of love. There are likewise several contrasts of character; first of the dry, caustic Ctesippus, of whom Socrates professes a humorous sort of fear, and Hippothales the flighty lover, who murders sleep by bawling out the name of his beloved; there is also a contrast between the false, exaggerated, sentimental love of Hippothales towards Lysis, and the childlike and innocent friendship of the boys with one another. Some difference appears to be intended between the characters of the more talkative Menexenus and the reserved and simple Lysis. Socrates draws out the latter by a new sort of irony, which is sometimes adopted in talking to children, and consists in asking a leading question which can only be answered in a sense contrary to the intention of the question: 'Your father and mother of course allow you to drive the chariot?' 'No they do not.' When Menexenus returns, the serious dialectic begins. He is described as 'very pugnacious,' and we are thus prepared for the part which a mere youth takes in a difficult argument. But Plato has not forgotten dramatic propriety, and Socrates proposes at last to refer the question to some older person (223 A).

SOME QUESTIONS RELATING TO FRIENDSHIP.

The subject of friendship has a lower place in the modern than in the ancient world, partly because a higher place is assigned by us to love and marriage. The very meaning of the word has become slighter and more superficial; it seems almost to be borrowed from the ancients, and has nearly disappeared in modern treatises on Moral Philosophy. The received examples of friendship are to be found chiefly among the Greeks and Romans. Hence the casuistical or other questions which arise out of the relations of friends have not often been considered seriously in modern times. Many of them will be found to be the same which are discussed in the Lysis. We may ask with Socrates, 1) whether friendship is 'of similars or dissimilars,' or of both; 2) whether such a tie exists between the good only and for the sake of the good; or 3) whether there may not be some peculiar attraction which draws together 'the neither good nor evil' for the sake of the good and because of the evil; 4) whether friendship is always mutual,— may there not be a one-sided and unrequited friendship? This question, which, like many others, is only one of a laxer or stricter use of words, seems to have greatly exercised the minds both of Aristotle and Plato.

5) Can we expect friendship to be permanent, or must we acknowledge with Cicero, '*Nihil difficilius quam amicitiam usque ad extremum vitae permanere*'? Is not friendship, even more than love, liable to be swayed by the caprices of fancy? The person who pleased us most at first sight or upon a slight acquaintance, when we have seen him again, and under different circumstances, may make a much less favourable impression on our minds. Young people swear 'eternal friendships,' but at these innocent perjuries their elders laugh. No one forms a friendship with the intention of renouncing it; yet in the course of a varied life it is practically certain that many changes will occur of feeling, opinion, locality, occupation, fortune, which will divide us from some persons and unite us to others. 6) There is an ancient saying, *Qui amicos amicum non habet.* But is not some less exclusive form of friendship better suited to the condition and nature of man? And in those especially who have no family ties, may not the feeling pass beyond one or a few, and embrace all

Lysis.
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with whom we come into contact, and, perhaps in a few passionate and exalted natures, all men everywhere? 7) The ancients had their three kinds of friendship, 'for the sake of the pleasant, the useful, and the good:' is the last to be resolved into the two first; or are the two first to be included in the last? The subject was puzzling to them: they could not say that friendship was only a quality, or a relation, or a virtue, or a kind of virtue; and they had not in the age of Plato reached the point of regarding it, like justice, as a form or attribute of virtue. They had another perplexity: 8) How could one of the noblest feelings of human nature be so near to one of the most detestable corruptions of it? (cp. Symposium 180 ff., 218 ff.; Laws viii, 835 ff.).

Leaving the Greek or ancient point of view, we may regard the question in a more general way. Friendship is the union of two persons in mutual affection and remembrance of one another. The friend can do for his friend what he cannot do for himself. He can give him counsel in time of difficulty; he can teach him 'to see himself as others see him'; he can stand by him, when all the world are against him; he can gladden and enlighten him by his presence; he 'can divide his sorrows,' he can 'double his joys;' he can anticipate his wants. He will discover ways of helping him without creating a sense of his own superiority; he will find out his mental trials, but only that he may minister to them. Among true friends jealousy has no place: they do not complain of one another for making new friends, or for not revealing some secret of their lives; (in friendship too there must be reserves;) they do not intrude upon one another, and they mutually rejoice in any good which happens to either of them, though it may be to the loss of the other. They may live apart and have little intercourse, but when they meet, the old tie is as strong as ever—according to the common saying, they find one another always the same. The greatest good of friendship is not daily intercourse, for circumstances rarely admit of this; but on the great occasions of life, when the advice of a friend is needed, then the word spoken in season about conduct, about health, about marriage, about business,—the letter written from a distance by a disinterested person who sees with clearer eyes may be of inestimable value. When the heart is failing and despair is setting in, then to hear the voice or grasp the hand of a friend, in

a shipwreck, in a defeat, in some other failure or misfortune, may restore the necessary courage and composure to the paralysed and disordered mind, and convert the feeble person into a hero; (cp. Symposium 179 ff.).

It is true that friendships are apt to be disappointing; either we expect too much from them; or we are indolent and do not 'keep them in repair;' or being admitted to intimacy with another, we see his faults too clearly and lose our respect for him; and he loses his affection for us. Friendships may be too violent; and they may be too sensitive. The egotism of one of the parties may be too much for the other. The word of counsel or sympathy has been uttered too obtrusively, at the wrong time, or in the wrong manner; or the need of it has not been perceived until too late. 'Oh if he had only told me' has been the silent thought of many a troubled soul. And some things have to be indicated rather than spoken, because the very mention of them tends to disturb the equability of friendship. The alienation of friends, like many other human evils, is commonly due to a want of tact and insight. There is not enough of the *Scimus et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.* The sweet draught of sympathy is not inexhaustible; and it tends to weaken the person who too freely partakes of it. Thus we see that there are many causes which impair the happiness of friends.

We may expect a friendship almost divine, such as philosophers have sometimes dreamed of: we find what is human. The good of it is necessarily limited; it does not take the place of marriage; it affords rather a solace than an arm of support. It had better not be based on pecuniary obligations; these more often mar than make a friendship. It is most likely to be permanent when the two friends are equal and independent, or when they are engaged together in some common work or have some public interest in common. It exists among the bad or inferior sor of men almost as much as among the good; the bad and good, and 'the neither bad nor good,' are drawn together in a strange manner by personal attachment. The essence of it is loyalty, without which it would cease to be friendship.

Another question 9) may be raised, whether friendship can safely exist between young persons of different sexes, not connected by ties of relationship, and without the thought of love or marriage;

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whether, again, a wife or a husband should have any intimate friend, besides his or her partner in marriage. The answer to this latter question is rather perplexing, and would probably be different in different countries (cp. Symp. p. 182). It would be hard to deny that without weakness or sentiment or the feelings usually called love, there may be manly friendships of men to women and womanly friendships of women to men; and we allow that the mind may be drawn out and the character enlarged by such attachments. But we also feel that they are attended with many dangers, and that this Romance of Heavenly Love requires a strength, a freedom from passion, a self-control, which, in youth especially, are rarely to be found. The propriety of them must be estimated a good deal by the manner in which public opinion regards them; they must be reconciled with the ordinary duties of life; and they must be justified by the result.

Yet another question, 10). Admitting that friendships cannot be always permanent, we may ask when and upon what conditions should they be dissolved. It would be futile to retain the name when the reality has ceased to be. That two friends should part company whenever the relation between them begins to drag may be better for both of them. But then arises the consideration, how should these friends in youth or friends of the past regard or be regarded by one another? They are parted, but there still remain duties mutually owing by them. They will not admit the world to share in their difference any more than in their friendship; the memory of an old attachment, like the memory of the dead, has a kind of sacredness for them on which they will not allow others to intrude. Neither, if they were ever worthy to bear the name of friends, will either of them entertain any enmity or dislike of the other who was once so much to him. Neither will he by 'shadowed hint reveal' the secrets great or small which an unfortunate mistake has placed within his reach. He who is of a noble mind will dwell upon his own faults rather than those of another, and will be ready to take upon himself the blame of their separation. He will feel pain at the loss of a friend; and he will remember with gratitude his ancient kindness. But he will not lightly renew a tie which has not been lightly broken. . . . These are a few of the Problems of Friendship, some of them suggested by the Lysis, others by modern life, which he who wishes to make or keep a friend may profitably study. (Cp. Bacon, Essay on Friendship; Cic. de Amicitia.)

LYSIS, OR FRIENDSHIP.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES, *who is the narrator.* MENEXENUS.
HIPPOTHALES. LYSIS.
CTESIPPUS.

SCENE:—A newly-erected Palaestra outside the walls of Athens.

Lysis. SOCRATES, HIPPOTHALES.

Steph. 203 I WAS going from the Academy straight to the Lyceum, intending to take the outer road, which is close under the wall. When I came to the postern gate of the city, which is by the fountain of Panops, I fell in with Hippothales, the son of Hieronymus, and Ctesippus the Paeanian, and a company of young men who were standing with them. Hippothales, seeing me approach, asked whence I came and whither I was going.

I am going, I replied, from the Academy straight to the Lyceum.

Then come straight to us, he said, and put in here; you may as well.

Who are you, I said; and where am I to come?

He showed me an enclosed space and an open door over against the wall. And there, he said, is the building at which we all meet: and a goodly company we are.

And what is this building, I asked; and what sort of entertainment have you?

204 The building, he replied, is a newly-erected Palaestra; and the entertainment is generally conversation, to which you are welcome.

Thank you, I said; and is there any teacher there?

Lysis.

SOCRATES, HIPPOTHALES, CTESIPPUS.

Yes, he said, your old friend and admirer, Miccus.

Indeed, I replied; he is a very eminent professor.

Are you disposed, he said, to go with me and see them?

Yes, I said; but I should like to know first, what is expected of me, and who is the favourite among you?

Some persons have one favourite, Socrates, and some another, he said.

And who is yours? I asked: tell me that, Hippothales.

The love fancies of Hippothales are very ridiculous.

At this he blushed; and I said to him, O Hippothales, thou son of Hieronymus! do not say that you are, or that you are not, in love; the confession is too late; for I see that you are not only in love, but are already far gone in your love. Simple and foolish as I am, the Gods have given me the power of understanding affections of this kind.

Whereupon he blushed more and more.

Ctesippus said: I like to see you blushing, Hippothales, and hesitating to tell Socrates the name; when, if he were with you but for a very short time, you would have plagued him to death by talking about nothing else. Indeed, Socrates, he has literally deafened us, and stopped our ears with the praises of Lysis; and if he is a little intoxicated, there is every likelihood that we may have our sleep murdered with a cry of Lysis. His performances in prose are bad enough, but nothing at all in comparison with his verse; and when he drenches us with his poems and other compositions, it is really too bad; and worse still is his manner of singing them to his love; he has a voice which is truly appalling, and we cannot help hearing him: and now having a question put to him by you, behold he is blushing.

Who is Lysis? I said: I suppose that he must be young; for the name does not recall any one to me.

Why, he said, his father being a very well-known man, he retains his patronymic, and is not as yet commonly called by his own name; but, although you do not know his name, I am sure that you must know his face, for that is quite enough to distinguish him.

But tell me whose son he is, I said.

He is the eldest son of Democrates, of the deme of Aexonè.

Ah, Hippothales, I said; what a noble and really perfect

love you have found! I wish that you would favour me with the exhibition which you have been making to the rest
205 of the company, and then I shall be able to judge whether you know what a lover ought to say about his love, either to the youth himself, or to others.

Lysis.

SOCRATES, HIPPOTHALES, CTESIPPUS.

Nay, Socrates, he said; you surely do not attach any importance to what he is saying.

Do you mean, I said, that you disown the love of the person whom he says that you love?

No; but I deny that I make verses or address compositions to him.

He is not in his right mind, said Ctesippus; he is talking nonsense, and is stark mad.

O Hippothales, I said, if you have ever made any verses or songs in honour of your favourite, I do not want to hear them; but I want to know the purport of them, that I may be able to judge of your mode of approaching your fair one.

Ctesippus will be able to tell you, he said; for if, as he avers, the sound of my words is always dinning in his ears, he must have a very accurate knowledge and recollection of them.

But though he is so devoted a lover, the love poems which he composes are made up of commonplaces.

Yes, indeed, said Ctesippus; I know only too well; and very ridiculous the tale is: for although he is a lover, and very devotedly in love, he has nothing particular to talk about to his beloved which a child might not say. Now is not that ridiculous? He can only speak of the wealth of Democrates, which the whole city celebrates, and grandfather Lysis, and the other ancestors of the youth, and their stud of horses, and their victory at the Pythian games, and at the Isthmus, and at Nemea with four horses and single horses—these are the tales which he composes and repeats. And there is greater twaddle still. Only the day before yesterday he made a poem in which he described the entertainment of Heracles, who was a connexion of the family, setting forth how in virtue of this relationship he was hospitably received by an ancestor of Lysis; this ancestor was himself begotten of Zeus by the daughter of the founder of the deme. And these are the sort of old wives' tales which he sings and recites to us, and we are obliged to listen to him.

When I heard this, I said: O ridiculous Hippothales! how

Lysis.

SOCRATES, HIPPOTHALES.

can you be making and singing hymns in honour of yourself before you have won?

But my songs and verses, he said, are not in honour of myself, Socrates.

You think not? I said.

Nay, but what do you think? he replied.

The verses are really in honour of himself if he win his love; or in dishonour of himself if he fail in his pursuit.

Most assuredly, I said, those songs are all in your own honour; for if you win your beautiful love, your discourses and songs will be a glory to you, and may be truly regarded as hymns of praise composed in honour of you who have conquered and won such a love; but if he slips away from you, the more you have praised him, the more ridiculous you will look at having lost this fairest and best of blessings; and therefore the wise lover does not praise his beloved until he 206
has won him, because he is afraid of accidents. There is also another danger; the fair, when any one praises or magnifies them, are filled with the spirit of pride and vain-glory. Do you not agree with me?

Yes, he said.

And the more vain-glorious they are, the more difficult is the capture of them?

I believe you.

What should you say of a hunter who frightened away his prey, and made the capture of the animals which he is hunting more difficult?

He would be a bad hunter, undoubtedly.

Yes; and if, instead of soothing them, he were to infuriate them with words and songs, that would show a great want of wit: do you not agree?

Yes.

He injures both his beloved and himself by writing poetry.

And now reflect, Hippothales, and see whether you are not guilty of all these errors in writing poetry. For I can hardly suppose that you will affirm a man to be a good poet who injures himself by his poetry.

Assuredly not, he said; such a poet would be a fool. And this is the reason why I take you into my counsels, Socrates, and I shall be glad of any further advice which you may have to offer. Will you tell me by what words or actions I may become endeared to my love?

That is not easy to determine, I said; but if you will

bring your love to me, and will let me talk with him, I may perhaps be able to show you how to converse with him, instead of singing and reciting in the fashion of which you are accused. *Lysis.* SOCRATES, HIPPOTHALES.

There will be no difficulty in bringing him, he replied; if you will only go with Ctesippus into the Palaestra, and sit down and talk, I believe that he will come of his own accord; for he is fond of listening, Socrates. And as this is the festival of the Hermaea, the young men and boys are all together, and there is no separation between them. He will be sure to come: but if he does not, Ctesippus with whom he is familiar, and whose relation Menexenus is his great friend, shall call him.

That will be the way, I said. Thereupon I led Ctesippus into the Palaestra, and the rest followed.

Upon entering we found that the boys had just been sacrificing; and this part of the festival was nearly at an end. They were all in their white array, and games at dice were going on among them. Most of them were in the outer court amusing themselves; but some were in a corner of the Apodyterium playing at odd and even with a number of dice, which they took out of little wicker baskets. There was also a circle of lookers-on; among them was Lysis. He was 207 standing with the other boys and youths, having a crown upon his head, like a fair vision, and not less worthy of praise for his goodness than for his beauty. We left them, and went over to the opposite side of the room, where, finding a quiet place, we sat down; and then we began to talk. This attracted Lysis, who was constantly turning round to look at us—he was evidently wanting to come to us. For a time he hesitated and had not the courage to come alone; but first of all, his friend Menexenus, leaving his play, entered the Palaestra from the court, and when he saw Ctesippus and myself, was going to take a seat by us; and then Lysis, seeing him, followed, and sat down by his side; and the other boys joined. I should observe that Hippothales, when he saw the crowd, got behind them, where he thought that he would be out of sight of Lysis, lest he should anger him; and there he stood and listened.

The boys at their games.

The beauty and goodness of Lysis.

Lysis and his friend Menexenus leave the boys and join the circle of young men.

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS, LYSIS.

Socrates asks which is the elder, nobler, fairer of the two.

I turned to Menexenus, and said: Son of Demophon, which of you two youths is the elder?

That is a matter of dispute between us, he said.

And which is the nobler? Is that also a matter of dispute?

Yes, certainly.

And another disputed point is, which is the fairer?

The two boys laughed.

I shall not ask which is the richer of the two, I said; for you are friends, are you not?

Certainly, they replied.

And friends have all things in common, so that one of you can be no richer than the other, if you say truly that you are friends.

They assented. I was about to ask which was the juster of the two, and which was the wiser of the two; but at this moment Menexenus was called away by some one who came and said that the gymnastic-master wanted him. I supposed that he had to offer sacrifice. So he went away, and I asked Lysis some more questions. I dare say, Lysis, I said, that your father and mother love you very much.

Menexenus is called away and Socrates continues the conversation with Lysis alone.

His parents love him very much; will they allow him to do whatever he likes?

Certainly, he said.

And they would wish you to be perfectly happy.

Yes.

But do you think that any one is happy who is in the condition of a slave, and who cannot do what he likes?

Certainly not.

I should think not indeed, he said.

And if your father and mother love you, and desire that you should be happy, no one can doubt that they are very ready to promote your happiness.

Certainly, he replied.

And do they then permit you to do what you like, and never rebuke you or hinder you from doing what you desire?

Yes, indeed, Socrates; there are a great many things which they hinder me from doing.

What do you mean? I said. Do they want you to be happy, and yet hinder you from doing what you like? for example, if you want to mount one of your father's chariots, and take the reins at a race, they will not allow you to do so—they will prevent you? 208

Certainly, he said, they will not allow me to do so.

Whom then will they allow?

There is a charioteer, whom my father pays for driving.

And do they trust a hireling more than you? and may he do what he likes with the horses? and do they pay him for this?

They do.

But I dare say that you may take the whip and guide the mule-cart if you like;—they will permit that?

Permit me! indeed they will not.

Then, I said, may no one use the whip to the mules?

Yes, he said, the muleteer.

And is he a slave or a free man?

A slave, he said.

And do they esteem a slave of more value than you who are their son? And do they entrust their property to him rather than to you? and allow him to do what he likes, when they prohibit you? Answer me now: Are you your own master, or do they not even allow that?

Nay, he said; of course they do not allow it.

Then you have a master?

Yes, my tutor; there he is.

And is he a slave?

To be sure; he is our slave, he replied.

He is a free-man, yet is governed by a slave.

Surely, I said, this is a strange thing, that a free man should be governed by a slave. And what does he do with you?

He takes me to my teachers.

You do not mean to say that your teachers also rule over you?

Of course they do.

Then I must say that your father is pleased to inflict many lords and masters on you. But at any rate when you go home to your mother, she will let you have your own way, and will not interfere with your happiness; her wool, or the piece of cloth which she is weaving, are at your disposal: I am sure that there is nothing to hinder you from touching her wooden spathe, or her comb, or any other of her spinning implements.

He may not touch one of his mother's spinning implements,

Nay, Socrates, he replied, laughing; not only does she

Lysis. hinder me, but I should be beaten, if I were to touch one of them.

SOCRATES, LYSIS. Well, I said, this is amazing. And did you ever behave ill to your father or your mother?

No, indeed, he replied.

and he derives no good from all his parents' wealth. But why then are they so terribly anxious to prevent you from being happy, and doing as you like?—keeping you all day long in subjection to another, and, in a word, doing nothing which you desire; so that you have no good, as would appear, out of their great possessions, which are under 209
the control of anybody rather than of you, and have no use of your own fair person, which is tended and taken care of by another; while you, Lysis, are master of nobody, and can do nothing?

Why, he said, Socrates, the reason is that I am not of age.

I doubt whether that is the real reason, I said; for I should imagine that your father Democrates, and your mother, do permit you to do many things already, and do not wait until you are of age: for example, if they want anything read or written, you, I presume, would be the first person in the house who is summoned by them.

Very true.

But he may write or read or tune the lyre at his own discretion. And you would be allowed to write or read the letters in any order which you please, or to take up the lyre and tune the notes, and play with the fingers, or strike with the plectrum, exactly as you please, and neither father nor mother would interfere with you.

That is true, he said.

Then what can be the reason, Lysis, I said, why they allow you to do the one and not the other?

I suppose, he said, because I understand the one, and not the other.

People will trust him in what he understands. Yes, my dear youth, I said, the reason is not any deficiency of years, but a deficiency of knowledge; and whenever your father thinks that you are wiser than he is, he will instantly commit himself and his possessions to you.

I think so.

Aye, I said; and about your neighbour, too, does not the same rule hold as about your father? If he is satisfied that

Lysis.

SOCRATES, LYSIS.

you know more of housekeeping than he does, will he continue to administer his affairs himself, or will he commit them to you?

I think that he will commit them to me.

Will not the Athenian people, too, entrust their affairs to you when they see that you have wisdom enough to manage them?

Even the Athenians or the great king will allow him to manage their affairs, to cook for them, to cure their eyes, if he knows how and can be of any use to them.

Yes.

And oh! let me put another case, I said: There is the great king, and he has an eldest son, who is the Prince of Asia;—suppose that you and I go to him and establish to his satisfaction that we are better cooks than his son, will he not entrust to us the prerogative of making soup, and putting in anything that we like while the pot is boiling, rather than to the Prince of Asia, who is his son?

To us, clearly.

And we shall be allowed to throw in salt by handfuls, whereas the son will not be allowed to put in as much as he can take up between his fingers?

Of course.

Or suppose again that the son has bad eyes, will he allow him, or will he not allow him, to touch his own eyes if he thinks that he has no knowledge of medicine?

210 He will not allow him.

Whereas, if he supposes us to have a knowledge of medicine, he will allow us to do what we like with him—even to open the eyes wide and sprinkle ashes upon them, because he supposes that we know what is best?

That is true.

And everything in which we appear to him to be wiser than himself or his son he will commit to us?

That is very true, Socrates, he replied.

Then now, my dear Lysis, I said, you perceive that in things which we know every one will trust us,—Hellenes and barbarians, men and women,—and we may do as we please about them, and no one will like to interfere with us; we shall be free, and masters of others; and these things will be really ours, for we shall be benefited by them. But in things of which we have no understanding, no one will trust us to do as seems good to us—they will hinder us as far as they

Lysis. can; and not only strangers, but father and mother, and the
SOCRATES, LYSIS. friend, if there be one, who is dearer still, will also hinder us; and we shall be subject to others; and these things will not be ours, for we shall not be benefited by them. Do you agree?

He assented.

And shall we be friends to others, and will any others love us, in as far as we are useless to them?

Certainly not.

Neither can your father or mother love you, nor can anybody love anybody else, in so far as they are useless to them?

No.

He must learn then to be useful and wise. And therefore, my boy, if you are wise, all men will be your friends and kindred, for you will be useful and good; but if you are not wise, neither father, nor mother, nor kindred, nor any one else, will be your friends. And in matters

Having no knowledge he has no conceit of knowledge. of which you have as yet no knowledge, can you have any conceit of knowledge?

That is impossible, he replied.

And you, Lysis, if you require a teacher, have not yet attained to wisdom.

True.

And therefore you are not conceited, having nothing of which to be conceited.

Indeed, Socrates, I think not.

When I heard him say this, I turned to Hippothales, and was very nearly making a blunder, for I was going to say to him: That is the way, Hippothales, in which you should talk to your beloved, humbling and lowering him, and not as you do, puffing him up and spoiling him. But I saw that he was in great excitement and confusion at what had been said, and I remembered that, although he was in the neighbourhood, he did not want to be seen by Lysis; so upon second thoughts 211
I refrained.

Lysis asks Socrates to argue with Menexenus. In the meantime Menexenus came back and sat down in his place by Lysis; and Lysis, in a childish and affectionate manner, whispered privately in my ear, so that Menexenus should not hear: Do, Socrates, tell Menexenus what you have been telling me.

Lysis.

SOCRATES, LYSIS, CTESIPPUS, MENEXENUS.

Suppose that you tell him yourself, Lysis, I replied; for I am sure that you were attending.

Certainly, he replied.

Try, then, to remember the words, and be as exact as you can in repeating them to him, and if you have forgotten anything, ask me again the next time that you see me.

I will be sure to do so, Socrates; but go on telling him something new, and let me hear, as long as I am allowed to stay.

I certainly cannot refuse, I said, since you ask me; but then, as you know, Menexenus is very pugnacious, and therefore you must come to the rescue if he attempts to upset me.

Yes, indeed, he said; he is very pugnacious, and that is the reason why I want you to argue with him.

That I may make a fool of myself?

No, indeed, he said; but I want you to put him down.

That is no easy matter, I replied; for he is a terrible fellow—a pupil of Ctesippus. And there is Ctesippus himself: do you see him?

Never mind, Socrates, you shall argue with him.

Well, I suppose that I must, I replied.

Hereupon Ctesippus complained that we were talking in secret, and keeping the feast to ourselves.

I shall be happy, I said, to let you have a share. Here is Lysis, who does not understand something that I was saying, and wants me to ask Menexenus, who, as he thinks, is likely to know.

And why do you not ask him? he said.

Socrates has set his heart upon having a friend but has never been able to find one.

Very well, I said, I will; and do you, Menexenus, answer. But first I must tell you that I am one who from my childhood upward have set my heart upon a certain thing. All people have their fancies; some desire horses, and others dogs; and some are fond of gold, and others of honour. Now, I have no violent desire of any of these things; but I have a passion for friends; and I would rather have a good friend than the best cock or quail in the world: I would even go further, and say the best horse or dog. Yea, by the dog
12 of Egypt, I should greatly prefer a real friend to all the gold of Darius, or even to Darius himself: I am such a lover of friends as that. And when I see you and Lysis, at your

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

early age, so easily possessed of this treasure, and so soon, he of you, and you of him, I am amazed and delighted, seeing that I myself, although I am now advanced in years, am so far from having made a similar acquisition, that I do not even know in what way a friend is acquired. But I want to ask you a question about this, for you have experience: tell me then, when one loves another, is the lover or the beloved the friend; or may either be the friend?

As Lysis and Menexenus have experience in friendship he would ask a question of them:—Is the lover or the beloved the friend?

Either may, I should think, be the friend of either.

Do you mean, I said, that if only one of them loves the other, they are mutual friends?

Yes, he said; that is my meaning.

But what if the lover is not loved in return? which is a very possible case.

Yes.

Or is, perhaps, even hated? which is a fancy which sometimes is entertained by lovers respecting their beloved. Nothing can exceed their love; and yet they imagine either that they are not loved in return, or that they are hated. Is not that true?

Yes, he said, quite true.

In that case, the one loves, and the other is loved?

Yes.

Or must there be in friendship a return of love?

Then which is the friend of which? Is the lover the friend of the beloved, whether he be loved in return, or hated; or is the beloved the friend; or is there no friendship at all on either side, unless they both love one another?

There would seem to be none at all.

Then this notion is not in accordance with our previous one. We were saying that both were friends, if one only loved; but now, unless they both love, neither is a friend.

That appears to be true.

Then nothing which does not love in return is beloved by a lover?

I think not.

Yet many things are dear which do not love in return; and so we arrive at

Then they are not lovers of horses, whom the horses do not love in return; nor lovers of quails, nor of dogs, nor of wine, nor of gymnastic exercises, who have no return of love; no, nor of wisdom, unless wisdom loves them in return. Or shall we say that they do love them, although they are

not beloved by them; and that the poet was wrong who sings—

'Happy the man to whom his children are dear, and steeds having single hoofs, and dogs of the chase, and the stranger of another land'?

the conclusion that what is beloved is dear and not what loves;

I do not think that he was wrong.

You think that he is right?

Yes.

Then, Menexenus, the conclusion is, that what is beloved, whether loving or hating, may be dear to the lover of it: for example, very young children, too young to love, or even
13 hating their father or mother when they are punished by them, are never dearer to them than at the time when they are being hated by them.

as, for example, young children when they are punished by their parents.

I think that what you say is true.

And, if so, not the lover, but the beloved, is the friend or dear one?

Yes.

And the hated one, and not the hater, is the enemy?

Clearly.

Then many men are loved by their enemies, and hated by their friends, and are the friends of their enemies, and the enemies of their friends. Yet how absurd, my dear friend, or indeed impossible is this paradox of a man being an enemy to his friend or a friend to his enemy?

What then is the result?—That neither the lover nor the beloved nor both together are friends.

I quite agree, Socrates, in what you say.

But if this cannot be, the lover will be the friend of that which is loved?

True.

And the hater will be the enemy of that which is hated?

Certainly.

Yet we must acknowledge in this, as in the preceding instance, that a man may be the friend of one who is not his friend, or who may be his enemy, when he loves that which does not love him or which even hates him. And he may be the enemy of one who is not his enemy, and is even his friend: for example, when he hates[1] that which does not hate him, or which even loves him.

That appears to be true.

[1] Omitting *φιλῇ*, or reading *μισῇ* instead.

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS, LYSIS.

But if the lover is not a friend, nor the beloved a friend, nor both together, what are we to say? Whom are we to call friends to one another? Do any remain?

Indeed, Socrates, I cannot find any.

But, O Menexenus! I said, may we not have been altogether wrong in our conclusions?

I am sure that we have been wrong, Socrates, said Lysis. And he blushed as he spoke, the words seeming to come from his lips involuntarily, because his whole mind was taken up with the argument; there was no mistaking his attentive look while he was listening.

I was pleased at the interest which was shown by Lysis, and I wanted to give Menexenus a rest, so I turned to him and said, I think, Lysis, that what you say is true, and that, if we had been right, we should never have gone so far wrong; let us proceed no further in this direction (for the road seems to be getting troublesome), but take the other path into which we turned, and see what the poets have to say; for they are to us in a manner the fathers and authors 2
of wisdom, and they speak of friends in no light or trivial manner, but God himself, as they say, makes them and draws them to one another; and this they express, if I am not mistaken, in the following words:—

The poets say that 'God is ever drawing like towards like,'

'God is ever drawing like towards like, and making them acquainted.'

I dare say that you have heard those words.

Yes, he said; I have.

And have you not also met with the treatises of philosophers who say that like must love like? they are the people who argue and write about nature and the universe.

Very true, he replied.

And are they right in saying this?

They may be.

Perhaps, I said, about half, or possibly, altogether, right, if their meaning were rightly apprehended by us. For the more a bad man has to do with a bad man, and the more nearly he is brought into contact with him, the more he will be likely to hate him, for he injures him; and injurer and injured cannot be friends. Is not that true?

Yes, he said.

Lysis.

Then, looked at in this way, one half of the saying is untrue, if the wicked are like one another?

SOCRATES, LYSIS.

Quite so.

meaning that not the wicked,

But what I imagine to be the real meaning of the words is, that the good are like one another, and friends to one another; and that the bad, as is often said of them, are never at unity with one another or with themselves; for they are passionate and restless, and anything which is at variance and enmity with itself is not likely to be in union or harmony with any other thing. Do you not agree?

Yes, I do.

but only the good are friends.

Then, my friend, those who say that the like is friendly to the like mean to intimate, if I rightly apprehend them, that the good only is the friend of the good, and of him only; but that the evil never attains to any real friendship, either with good or evil. Do you agree?

He nodded assent.

Then now we know how to answer the question 'Who are friends?' for the argument declares 'That the good are friends.'

Yes, he said, that is true.

Yes, I replied; and yet I am not quite satisfied with this answer. By heaven, and shall I tell you what I suspect? I will. Assuming like, inasmuch as he is like, to be the friend of like, and useful to him—or rather let me try another way of putting the matter: Can like do any good or harm to like which he could not do to himself, or suffer anything from his like which he would not suffer from himself? And

But what good or harm can the good do to one another which they could not do for themselves?

215 if neither can be of any use to the other, how can they be loved by one another? Can they now?

They cannot.

And can he who is not loved be a friend?

Certainly not.

But say that the like is not the friend of the like in so far as he is like; still the good may be the friend of the good in so far as he is good?

True.

The good have no need of friends.

But then again, will not the good, in so far as he is good, be sufficient for himself? Certainly he will. And he who is sufficient wants nothing—that is implied in the word sufficient.

Lysis. Of course not.

SOCRATES, LYSIS. And he who wants nothing will desire nothing?

He will not.

Neither can he love that which he does not desire?

He cannot.

And he who loves not is not a lover or friend?

Clearly not.

What place then is there for friendship, if, when absent, good men have no need of one another (for even when alone they are sufficient for themselves), and when present have no use of one another? How can such persons ever be induced to value one another?

They cannot.

And friends they cannot be, unless they value one another?

Very true.

But see now, Lysis, whether we are not being deceived in all this—are we not indeed entirely wrong?

How so? he replied.

Have I not heard some one say, as I just now recollect, that the like is the greatest enemy of the like, the good of the good?—Yes, and he quoted the authority of Hesiod, who says:

Another word of a poet: 'Potter quarrels with potter.'

> 'Potter quarrels with potter, bard with bard,
> Beggar with beggar;'

and of all other things he affirmed, in like manner, 'That of necessity the most like are most full of envy, strife, and hatred of one another, and the most unlike, of friendship. For the poor man is compelled to be the friend of the rich, and the weak requires the aid of the strong, and the sick man of the physician; and every one who is ignorant, has to love and court him who knows.' And indeed he went on to say in grandiloquent language, that the idea of friendship existing between similars is not the truth, but the very reverse of the truth, and that the most opposed are the most friendly; for that everything desires not like but that which is most unlike: for example, the dry desires the moist, the cold the hot, the bitter the sweet, the sharp the blunt, the void the full, the full the void, and so of all other things; for the opposite is the food of the opposite, whereas like receives nothing from

Friendship then is of opposites.

216 like. And I thought that he who said this was a charming man, and that he spoke well. What do the rest of you say? *Lysis.* SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

I should say, at first hearing, that he is right, said Menexenus.

Then we are to say that the greatest friendship is of opposites?

Exactly.

Yes, Menexenus; but will not that be a monstrous answer? and will not the all-wise eristics be down upon us in triumph, and ask, fairly enough, whether love is not the very opposite of hate; and what answer shall we make to them—must we not admit that they speak the truth? But this is a monstrous doctrine. For friendship is of love and not of hate.

We must.

They will then proceed to ask whether the enemy is the friend of the friend, or the friend the friend of the enemy?

Neither, he replied.

Well, but is a just man the friend of the unjust, or the temperate of the intemperate, or the good of the bad?

I do not see how that is possible.

And yet, I said, if friendship goes by contraries, the contraries must be friends.

They must.

Then neither like and like nor unlike and unlike are friends. Then neither like and like, nor unlike and unlike, are friends.

I suppose not.

And yet there is a further consideration: may not all these notions of friendship be erroneous? but may not that which is neither good nor evil still in some cases be the friend of the good?

How do you mean? he said.

Why really, I said, the truth is that I do not know; but my head is dizzy with thinking of the argument, and therefore I hazard the conjecture, that 'the beautiful is the friend,' as the old proverb says. Beauty is certainly a soft, smooth, slippery thing, and therefore of a nature which easily slips in and permeates our souls. For I affirm that the good is the beautiful. You will agree to that? The beautiful which is also the good is the friend of the neither good nor evil.

Yes.

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

This I say from a sort of notion that what is neither good nor evil is the friend of the beautiful and the good, and I will tell you why I am inclined to think so: I assume that there are three principles—the good, the bad, and that which is neither good nor bad. You would agree—would you not?

I agree.

And neither is the good the friend of the good, nor the evil of the evil, nor the good of the evil;—these alternatives are excluded by the previous argument; and therefore, if there be such a thing as friendship or love at all, we must infer that what is neither good nor evil must be the friend, either of the good, or of that which is neither good nor evil, for nothing can be the friend of the bad.

True.

But neither can like be the friend of like, as we were just now saying.

True.

And if so, that which is neither good nor evil can have no friend which is neither good nor evil.

Clearly not.

Then the good alone is the friend of that only which is neither good nor evil.

Certainly, it would so appear. 217

Analogy of medicine.

And does not this seem to put us in the right way? Just remark, that the body which is in health requires neither medical nor any other aid, but is well enough; and the healthy man has no love of the physician, because he is in health.

He has none.

But the sick loves him, because he is sick?

Certainly.

The human body, which is neither good nor evil in itself, may, by reason of the presence of evil, have need of good.

And sickness is an evil, and the art of medicine a good and useful thing?

Yes.

But the human body, regarded as a body, is neither good nor evil?

True.

And the body is compelled by reason of disease to court and make friends of the art of medicine?

Yes.

Then that which is neither good nor evil becomes the friend of good, by reason of the presence of evil?

So we may infer.

And clearly this must have happened before that which was neither good nor evil had become altogether corrupted with the element of evil—if itself had become evil it would not still desire and love the good; for, as we were saying, the evil cannot be the friend of the good.

Impossible.

Evil may be present, but yet not assimilated.

Further, I must observe that some substances are assimilated when others are present with them; and there are some which are not assimilated: take, for example, the case of an ointment or colour which is put on another substance.

Very good.

In such a case, is the substance which is anointed the same as the colour or ointment?

What do you mean? he said.

This is what I mean: Suppose that I were to cover your auburn locks with white lead, would they be really white, or would they only appear to be white?

They would only appear to be white, he replied.

And yet whiteness would be present in them?

True.

But that would not make them at all the more white, notwithstanding the presence of white in them—they would not be white any more than black?

No.

But when old age infuses whiteness into them, then they become assimilated, and are white by the presence of white.

Certainly.

Now I want to know whether in all cases a substance is assimilated by the presence of another substance; or must the presence be after a peculiar sort?

The latter, he said.

Then that which is neither good nor evil may be in the presence of evil, but not as yet evil, and that has happened before now?

Yes.

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

The presence of evil arouses in what is not evil the desire of good.

And when anything is in the presence of evil, not being as yet evil, the presence of good arouses the desire of good in that thing; but the presence of evil, which makes a thing 218
evil, takes away the desire and friendship of the good; for that which was once both good and evil has now become evil only, and the good was supposed to have no friendship with the evil?

None.

And therefore we say that those who are already wise, whether Gods or men, are no longer lovers of wisdom; nor can they be lovers of wisdom who are ignorant to the extent of being evil, for no evil or ignorant person is a lover of wisdom. There remain those who have the misfortune to be ignorant, but are not yet hardened in their ignorance, or void of understanding, and do not as yet fancy that they know what they do not know: and therefore those who are the lovers of wisdom are as yet neither good nor bad. But the bad do not love wisdom any more than the good; for, as we have already seen, neither is unlike the friend of unlike, nor like of like. You remember that?

Yes, they both said.

Friendship is the love of the good when evil is present.

And so, Lysis and Menexenus, we have discovered the nature of friendship—there can be no doubt of it: Friendship is the love which by reason of the presence of evil the neither good nor evil has of the good, either in the soul, or in the body, or anywhere.

They both agreed and entirely assented, and for a moment I rejoiced and was satisfied like a huntsman just holding fast his prey. But then a most unaccountable suspicion came across me, and I felt that the conclusion was untrue. I was pained, and said, Alas! Lysis and Menexenus, I am afraid that we have been grasping at a shadow only.

Why do you say so? said Menexenus.

Arguments, like men, are often pretenders.

I am afraid, I said, that the argument about friendship is false: arguments, like men, are often pretenders.

How do you mean? he asked.

Well, I said; look at the matter in this way: a friend is the friend of some one; is he not?

Certainly he is.

And has he a motive and object in being a friend, or has he no motive and object?

He has a motive and object.

And is the object which makes him a friend, dear to him, or neither dear nor hateful to him?

I do not quite follow you, he said.

I do not wonder at that, I said. But perhaps, if I put the matter in another way, you will be able to follow me, and my own meaning will be clearer to myself. The sick man, as I was just now saying, is the friend of the physician—is he not?

Yes.

And he is the friend of the physician because of disease, and for the sake of health?

Yes.

And disease is an evil?

Certainly.

And what of health? I said. Is that good or evil, or neither?

219 Good, he replied.

And we were saying, I believe, that the body being neither good nor evil, because of disease, that is to say because of evil, is the friend of medicine, and medicine is a good: and medicine has entered into this friendship for the sake of health, and health is a good.

True.

And is health a friend, or not a friend?

A friend.

And disease is an enemy?

Yes.

Then that which is neither good nor evil is the friend of the good because of the evil and hateful, and for the sake of the good and the friend?

Clearly.

Then the friend is a friend for the sake of the friend, and because of the enemy?

That is to be inferred.

Then at this point, my boys, let us take heed, and be on our guard against deceptions. I will not again repeat that the friend is the friend of the friend, and the like of the like,

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

which has been declared by us to be an impossibility; but, in order that this new statement may not delude us, let us attentively examine another point, which I will proceed to explain: Medicine, as we were saying, is a friend, or dear to us for the sake of health?

Yes.

And health is also dear?

Certainly.

And if dear, then dear for the sake of something?

Yes.

And surely this object must also be dear, as is implied in our previous admissions?

Yes.

And that something dear involves something else dear?

Yes.

But then, proceeding in this way, shall we not arrive at some first principle of friendship or dearness which is not capable of being referred to any other, for the sake of which, as we maintain, all other things are dear, and, having there arrived, we shall stop?

True.

Nothing can be dear in the highest sense for the sake of something else.

My fear is that all those other things, which, as we say, are dear for the sake of another, are illusions and deceptions only, but where that first principle is, there is the true ideal of friendship. Let me put the matter thus: Suppose the case of a great treasure (this may be a son, who is more precious to his father than all his other treasures); would not the father, who values his son above all things, value other things also for the sake of his son? I mean, for instance, if he knew that his son had drunk hemlock, and the father thought that wine would save him, he would value the wine?

He would.

And also the vessel which contains the wine?

Certainly.

But does he therefore value the three measures of wine, or the earthen vessel which contains them, equally with his son? Is not this rather the true state of the case? All his anxiety has regard not to the means which are provided for the sake 220
of an object, but to the object for the sake of which they are provided. And although we may often say that gold and

silver are highly valued by us, that is not the truth; for there is a further object, whatever it may be, which we value most of all, and for the sake of which gold and all our other possessions are acquired by us. Am I not right? *Lysis.* SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

Yes, certainly.

And may not the same be said of the friend? That which is only dear to us for the sake of something else is improperly said to be dear, but the truly dear is that in which all these so-called dear friendships terminate.

That, he said, appears to be true.

And the truly dear or ultimate principle of friendship is not for the sake of any other or further dear.

True.

Then we have done with the notion that friendship has any further object. May we then infer that the good is the friend?

I think so.

The good which is loved for the sake of the evil is relative only. Some higher principle of friendship than this is required.

And the good is loved for the sake of the evil? Let me put the case in this way: Suppose that of the three principles, good, evil, and that which is neither good nor evil, there remained only the good and the neutral, and that evil went far away, and in no way affected soul or body, nor ever at all that class of things which, as we say, are neither good nor evil in themselves;—would the good be of any use, or other than useless to us? For if there were nothing to hurt us any longer, we should have no need of anything that would do us good. Then would be clearly seen that we did but love and desire the good because of the evil, and as the remedy of the evil, which was the disease; but if there had been no disease, there would have been no need of a remedy. Is not this the nature of the good—to be loved by us who are placed between the two, because of the evil? but there is no use in the good for its own sake.

I suppose not.

Then the final principle of friendship, in which all other friendships terminated, those, I mean, which are relatively dear and for the sake of something else, is of another and a different nature from them. For they are called dear because of another dear or friend. But with the true friend or dear, the case is quite the reverse; for that is proved to

Lysis.
SOCRATES, MENEXENUS.

be dear because of the hated, and if the hated were away it would be no longer dear.

Very true, he replied: at any rate not if our present view holds good.

A passing speculation respecting the nature of evil.

But, oh! will you tell me, I said, whether if evil were to perish, we should hunger any more, or thirst any more, or have any similar desire? Or may we suppose that hunger 221
will remain while men and animals remain, but not so as to be hurtful? And the same of thirst and the other desires,—that they will remain, but will not be evil because evil has perished? Or rather shall I say, that to ask what either will be then or will not be is ridiculous, for who knows? This we do know, that in our present condition hunger may injure us, and may also benefit us:—Is not that true?

Yes.

And in like manner thirst or any similar desire may sometimes be a good and sometimes an evil to us, and sometimes neither one nor the other?

To be sure.

But is there any reason why, because evil perishes, that which is not evil should perish with it?

None.

Then, even if evil perishes, the desires which are neither good nor evil will remain?

Clearly they will.

And must not a man love that which he desires and affects?

He must.

Then, even if evil perishes, there may still remain some elements of love or friendship?

Yes.

But not if evil is the cause of friendship: for in that case nothing will be the friend of any other thing after the destruction of evil; for the effect cannot remain when the cause is destroyed.

True.

Evil not the true cause of friendship.

And have we not admitted already that the friend loves something for a reason? and at the time of making the admission we were of opinion that the neither good nor evil loves the good because of the evil?

Very true.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS, LYSIS.

But now our view is changed, and we conceive that there must be some other cause of friendship?

I suppose so.

Is desire the true cause?

May not the truth be rather, as we were saying just now, that desire is the cause of friendship; for that which desires is dear to that which is desired at the time of desiring it? and may not the other theory have been only a long story about nothing?

Likely enough.

But surely, I said, he who desires, desires that of which he is in want?

Yes.

And that of which he is in want is dear to him?

True.

And he is in want of that of which he is deprived?

Certainly.

Yes,—desire of the natural or the congenial.

Then love, and desire, and friendship would appear to be of the natural or congenial. Such, Lysis and Menexenus, is the inference.

They assented.

Then if you are friends, you must have natures which are congenial to one another?

Certainly, they both said.

222 And I say, my boys, that no one who loves or desires another would ever have loved or desired or affected him, if he had not been in some way congenial to him, either in his soul, or in his character, or in his manners, or in his form.

Yes, yes, said Menexenus. But Lysis was silent.

Then, I said, the conclusion is, that what is of a congenial nature must be loved.

It follows, he said.

Then the lover, who is true and no counterfeit, must of necessity be loved by his love.

Lysis and Menexenus gave a faint assent to this; and Hippothales changed into all manner of colours with delight.

But our former argument

Here, intending to revise the argument, I said: Can we point out any difference between the congenial and the like?

Lysis.

SOCRATES, MENEXENUS, LYSIS.

showed that the like was useless to the like: we must therefore find a way to distinguish between the congenial and the like.

For if that is possible, then I think, Lysis and Menexenus, there may be some sense in our argument about friendship. But if the congenial is only the like, how will you get rid of the other argument as to the uselessness of like to like in as far as they are like; for to say that what is useless is dear, would be absurd? Suppose, then, that as we are running a little wild in the argument, we agree to distinguish between the congenial and the like—such a distinction may perhaps be allowed.

By all means.

And shall we further say that the good is congenial, and the evil uncongenial to every one? Or again that the evil is congenial to the evil, and the good to the good; and that which is neither good nor evil to that which is neither good nor evil?

They agreed to the latter alternative.

Then, my boys, we have again fallen into the old discarded error; for the unjust will be the friend of the unjust, and the bad of the bad, as well as the good of the good.

Such appears to be the result.

Shall we say that the congenial is the good?

But again, if we say that the congenial is the same as the good, in that case the good and he only will be the friend of the good.

True.

But that proposition has been already disproved.

But that too was a position of ours which, as you will remember, has been already refuted by ourselves.

We remember.

A conclusion in which nothing is concluded.

Then what is to be done? Or rather is there anything to be done? I can only, like the wise men who argue in courts, sum up the arguments:—If neither the beloved, nor the lover, nor the like, nor the unlike, nor the good, nor the congenial, nor any other of whom we spoke—for there were such a number of them that I cannot remember all—if none of these are friends, I know not what remains to be said.

Here I was going to invite the opinion of some older 223
person, when suddenly we were interrupted by the tutors of Lysis and Menexenus, who came upon us like an evil apparition with their brothers, and bade them go home, as it was getting late. At first, we and the by-standers drove them off; but afterwards, as they would not mind, and only

went on shouting in their barbarous dialect, and got angry, and kept calling the boys—they appeared to us to have been drinking rather too much at the Hermaea, which made them difficult to manage—we fairly gave way and broke up the company. *Lysis.* SOCRATES.

I said, however, a few words to the boys at parting: O Menexenus and Lysis, how ridiculous that you two boys, and I, an old boy, who would fain be one of you, should imagine ourselves to be friends—this is what the by-standers will go away and say—and as yet we have not been able to discover what is a friend!

LACHES.

INTRODUCTION.

Steph. LYSIMACHUS, the son of Aristides the Just, and Melesias, the son
178 of the elder Thucydides, two aged men who lived together, are desirous of educating their sons in the best manner. Their own
179 education, as often happens with the sons of great men, has been neglected; and they are resolved that their children shall have more care taken of them, than they received themselves at the hands of their fathers.

At their request, Nicias and Laches have accompanied them to see a man named Stesilaus fighting in heavy armour. The two
180 fathers ask the two generals what they think of this exhibition, and whether they would advise that their sons should acquire the accomplishment. Nicias and Laches are quite willing to give their opinion; but they suggest that Socrates should be invited to take part in the consultation. He is a stranger to Lysimachus, but is
181 afterwards recognised as the son of his old friend Sophroniscus, with whom he never had a difference to the hour of his death. Socrates is also known to Nicias, to whom he had introduced the excellent Damon, musician and sophist, as a tutor for his son, and to Laches, who had witnessed his heroic behaviour at the battle of Delium (cp. Symp. 221).

Socrates, as he is younger than either Nicias or Laches, prefers to wait until they have delivered their opinions, which they give in a characteristic manner. Nicias, the tactician, is very much in
182 favour of the new art, which he describes as the gymnastics of war — useful when the ranks are formed, and still more useful when they are broken; creating a general interest in military studies, and greatly adding to the appearance of the soldier in the field.
183 Laches, the blunt warrior, is of opinion that such an art is not knowledge, and cannot be of any value because the Lacedaemonians, those great masters of arms, neglect it. His own experience in actual service has taught him that these pretenders

are useless and ridiculous. This man Stesilaus has been seen by him on board ship making a very sorry exhibition of himself. The possession of the art will make the coward rash, and subject the 184
courageous, if he chance to make a slip, to invidious remarks. And now let Socrates be taken into counsel. As they differ he must decide.

Socrates would rather not decide the question by a plurality of votes: in such a serious matter as the education of a friend's 185
children, he would consult the one skilled person who has had masters, and has works to show as evidences of his skill. This is not himself; for he has never been able to pay the sophists for 186
instructing him, and has never had the wit to do or discover anything. But Nicias and Laches are older and richer than he is: 187
they have had teachers, and perhaps have made discoveries; and he would have trusted them entirely, if they had not been diametrically opposed.

Lysimachus here proposes to resign the argument into the hands of the younger part of the company, as he is old, and has a bad memory. He earnestly requests Socrates to remain; — in this showing, as Nicias says, how little he knows the man, who 188
will certainly not go away until he has cross-examined the company about their past lives. Nicias has often submitted to this process; and Laches is quite willing to learn from Socrates, because his 189
actions, in the true Dorian mode, correspond to his words.

Socrates proceeds: We might ask who are our teachers? But 190
a better and more thorough way of examining the question will be to ask, 'What is Virtue?' — or rather, to restrict the inquiry to that part of virtue which is concerned with the use of weapons — 'What is Courage?' Laches thinks that he knows this: (1) 'He is
courageous who remains at his post.' But some nations fight 191
flying, after the manner of Aeneas in Homer; or as the heavy-armed Spartans also did at the battle of Plataea. (2) Socrates
wants a more general definition, not only of military courage, but 192
of courage of all sorts, tried both amid pleasures and pains. Laches replies that this universal courage is endurance. But courage is a good thing, and mere endurance may be hurtful and injurious. Therefore (3) the element of intelligence must be added. But then 193
again unintelligent endurance may often be more courageous than the intelligent, the bad than the good. How is this contradiction

to be solved? Socrates and Laches are not set 'to the Dorian mode' of words and actions; for their words are all confusion, although their actions are courageous. Still they must 'endure' in an argument about endurance. Laches is very willing, and is quite sure that he knows what courage is, if he could only tell.

194 Nicias is now appealed to; and in reply he offers a definition which he has heard from Socrates himself, to the effect that (1) 'Courage is intelligence.' Laches derides this; and Socrates enquires, 'What sort of intelligence?' to which Nicias replies,
195 'Intelligence of things terrible.' 'But every man knows the things to be dreaded in his own art.' 'No they do not. They may predict results, but cannot tell whether they are really terrible; only the courageous man can tell that.' Laches draws
196 the inference that the courageous man is either a soothsayer or a god.

Again, (2) in Nicias' way of speaking, the term 'courageous' must be denied to animals or children, because they do not know
197 the danger. Against this inversion of the ordinary use of language Laches reclaims, but is in some degree mollified by a compliment to his own courage. Still, he does not like to see an Athenian statesman and general descending to sophistries of this sort.
198 Socrates resumes the argument. Courage has been defined to be intelligence or knowledge of the terrible; and courage is not all
199 virtue, but only one of the virtues. The terrible is in the future, and therefore the knowledge of the terrible is a knowledge of the future. But there can be no knowledge of future good or evil separated from a knowledge of the good and evil of the past or present; that is to say, of all good and evil. Courage, therefore, is the knowledge of good and evil generally. But he who has the knowledge of good and evil generally, must not only have courage,
200 but also temperance, justice, and every other virtue. Thus, a single virtue would be the same as all virtues (cp. Protagoras, 350 foll.). And after all the two generals, and Socrates, the hero of Delium, are still in ignorance of the nature of courage. They
201 must go to school again, boys, old men and all.

Some points of resemblance, and some points of difference, appear in the Laches when compared with the Charmides and Lysis. There is less of poetical and simple beauty, and more of dramatic interest and power. They are richer in the externals

Laches. INTRODUCTION.

of the scene; the Laches has more play and development of character. In the Lysis and Charmides the youths are the central figures, and frequent allusions are made to the place of meeting, which is a palaestra. Here the place of meeting, which is also a palaestra, is quite forgotten, and the boys play a subordinate part. The *séance* is of old and elder men, of whom Socrates is the youngest.

First is the aged Lysimachus, who may be compared with Cephalus in the Republic, and, like him, withdraws from the argument. Melesias, who is only his shadow, also subsides into silence. Both of them, by their own confession, have been ill-educated, as is further shown by the circumstance that Lysimachus, the friend of Sophroniscus, has never heard of the fame of Socrates, his son; they belong to different circles. In the Meno (p. 94) their want of education in all but the arts of riding and wrestling is adduced as a proof that virtue cannot be taught. The recognition of Socrates by Lysimachus is extremely graceful; and his military exploits naturally connect him with the two generals, of whom one has witnessed them. The characters of Nicias and Laches are indicated by their opinions on the exhibition of the man fighting in heavy armour. The more enlightened Nicias is quite ready to accept the new art, which Laches treats with ridicule, seeming to think that this, or any other military question, may be settled by asking, 'What do the Lacedaemonians say?' The one is the thoughtful general, willing to avail himself of any discovery in the art of war (Aristoph. Aves, 363); the other is the practical man, who relies on his own experience, and is the enemy of innovation; he can act but cannot speak, and is apt to lose his temper. It is to be noted that one of them is supposed to be a hearer of Socrates; the other is only acquainted with his actions. Laches is the admirer of the Dorian mode; and into his mouth the remark is put that there are some persons who, having never been taught, are better than those who have. Like a novice in the art of disputation, he is delighted with the hits of Socrates; and is disposed to be angry with the refinements of Nicias.

In the discussion of the main thesis of the Dialogue — 'What is Courage?' the antagonism of the two characters is still more clearly brought out; and in this, as in the preliminary question, the truth is parted between them. Gradually, and not without difficulty,

Laches is made to pass on from the more popular to the more philosophical; it has never occurred to him that there was any other courage than that of the soldier; and only by an effort of the mind can he frame a general notion at all. No sooner has this general notion been formed than it evanesces before the dialectic of Socrates; and Nicias appears from the other side with the Socratic doctrine, that courage is knowledge. This is explained to mean knowledge of things terrible in the future. But Socrates denies that the knowledge of the future is separable from that of the past and present; in other words, true knowledge is not that of the soothsayer but of the philosopher. And all knowledge will thus be equivalent to all virtue — a position which elsewhere Socrates is not unwilling to admit, but which will not assist us in distinguishing the nature of courage. In this part of the Dialogue the contrast between the mode of cross-examination which is practised by Laches and by Socrates, and also the manner in which the definition of Laches is made to approximate to that of Nicias, are worthy of attention.

Thus, with some intimation of the connexion and unity of virtue and knowledge, we arrive at no distinct result. The two aspects of courage are never harmonized. The knowledge which in the Protagoras is explained as the faculty of estimating pleasures and pains is here lost in an unmeaning and transcendental conception. Yet several true intimations of the nature of courage are allowed to appear: (1) That courage is moral as well as physical: (2) That true courage is inseparable from knowledge, and yet (3) is based on a natural instinct. Laches exhibits one aspect of courage; Nicias the other. The perfect image and harmony of both is only realized in Socrates himself.

The Dialogue offers one among many examples of the freedom with which Plato treats facts. For the scene must be supposed to have occurred between B. C. 424, the year of the battle of Delium (181 B), and B. C. 418, the year of the battle of Mantinea, at which Laches fell. But if Socrates was more than seventy years of age at his trial in 399 (see Apology), he could not have been a young man at any time after the battle of Delium.

LACHES, OR COURAGE.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

LYSIMACHUS, *son of Aristides.*	NICIAS.
MELESIAS, *son of Thucydides.*	LACHES.
THEIR SONS.	SOCRATES.

Laches.

LYSIMACHUS.

Lysimachus and Melesias request Nicias and Laches to advise with them respecting the education of their sons.

Steph. 178 *Lys.* You have seen the exhibition of the man fighting in armour, Nicias and Laches, but we did not tell you at the time the reason why my friend Melesias and I asked you to go with us and see him. I think that we may as well confess what this was, for we certainly ought not to have any reserve with you. The reason was, that we were intending to ask your advice. Some laugh at the very notion of advising others, and when they are asked will not say what they think. They guess at the wishes of the person who asks them, and answer according to his, and not according to their own, opinion. But as we know that you are good judges, and will say exactly what you think, we have taken you into our counsels. The matter about which I am making all this preface is as follows: Melesias and I have two sons; that is his son, and he is named Thucydides, after his grand- 179 father; and this is mine, who is also called after his grandfather, Aristides. Now, we are resolved to take the greatest care of the youths, and not to let them run about as they like, which is too often the way with the young, when they are no longer children, but to begin at once and do the utmost that we can for them. And knowing you to have sons of your own, we thought that you were most likely to have attended to their training and improvement, and, if perchance

Laches.

LYSIMACHUS, NICIAS, LACHES.

you have not attended to them, we may remind you that you ought to have done so, and would invite you to assist us in the fulfilment of a common duty. I will tell you, Nicias and Laches, even at the risk of being tedious, how we came to think of this. Melesias and I live together, and our sons live with us; and now, as I was saying at first, we are going to confess to you. Both of us often talk to the lads about the many noble deeds which our own fathers did in war and peace—in the management of the allies, and in the administration of the city; but neither of us has any deeds of his own which he can show. The truth is that we are ashamed of this contrast being seen by them, and we blame our fathers for letting us be spoiled in the days of our youth, while they were occupied with the concerns of others; and we urge all this upon the lads, pointing out to them that they will not grow up to honour if they are rebellious and take no pains about themselves; but that if they take pains they may, perhaps, become worthy of the names which they bear. They, on their part, promise to comply with our wishes; and our care is to discover what studies or pursuits are likely to be most improving to them. Some one commended to us the art of fighting in armour, which he thought an excellent accomplishment for a young man to learn; and he praised the man whose exhibition you have seen, and told us to go and see him. And we determined that we would go, and get you to accompany us; and we were intending at the same time, if you did not object, to take counsel with you about the education of our sons. That is the matter which we wanted to talk over with you; and we hope that you will give us your opinion about this art of 180
fighting in armour, and about any other studies or pursuits which may or may not be desirable for a young man to learn. Please to say whether you agree to our proposal.

Should the art of fighting in armour be taught them?

Nic. As far as I am concerned, Lysimachus and Melesias, I applaud your purpose, and will gladly assist you; and I believe that you, Laches, will be equally glad.

La. Certainly, Nicias; and I quite approve of the remark which Lysimachus made about his own father and the father of Melesias, and which is applicable, not only to them, but to us, and to every one who is occupied with public affairs.

Laches.

LYSIMACHUS, NICIAS, LACHES.

Laches recommends that they shall take Socrates into their counsels.

As he says, such persons are too apt to be negligent and careless of their own children and their private concerns. There is much truth in that remark of yours, Lysimachus. But why, instead of consulting us, do you not consult our friend Socrates about the education of the youths? He is of the same deme with you, and is always passing his time in places where the youth have any noble study or pursuit, such as you are enquiring after.

Lys. Why, Laches, has Socrates ever attended to matters of this sort?

La. Certainly, Lysimachus.

Nic. That I have the means of knowing as well as Laches; for quite lately he supplied me with a teacher of music for my sons,—Damon, the disciple of Agathocles, who is a most accomplished man in every way, as well as a musician, and a companion of inestimable value for young men at their age.

Lysimachus had heard the name of Socrates, and makes the discovery that he is the son of his old friend Sophroniscus.

Lys. Those who have reached my time of life, Socrates and Nicias and Laches, fall out of acquaintance with the young, because they are generally detained at home by old age; but you, O son of Sophroniscus, should let your fellow demesman have the benefit of any advice which you are able to give. Moreover I have a claim upon you as an old friend of your father; for I and he were always companions and friends, and to the hour of his death there never was a difference between us; and now it comes back to me, at the mention of your name, that I have heard these lads talking
181 to one another at home, and often speaking of Socrates in terms of the highest praise; but I have never thought to ask them whether the son of Sophroniscus was the person whom they meant. Tell me, my boys, whether this is the Socrates of whom you have often spoken?

Son. Certainly, father, this is he.

Laches praises the courage which was shown by Socrates at the battle of Delium.

Lys. I am delighted to hear, Socrates, that you maintain the name of your father, who was a most excellent man; and I further rejoice at the prospect of our family ties being renewed.

La. Indeed, Lysimachus, you ought not to give him up; for I can assure you that I have seen him maintaining, not only his father's, but also his country's name. He was my

Laches.

LYSIMACHUS, SOCRATES, NICIAS.

companion in the retreat from Delium, and I can tell you that if others had only been like him, the honour of our country would have been upheld, and the great defeat would never have occurred.

The opinion of Socrates is asked respecting the art of fighting in armour. He would like to hear what Nicias has to say before giving an opinion.

Lys. That is very high praise which is accorded to you, Socrates, by faithful witnesses and for actions like those which they praise. Let me tell you the pleasure which I feel in hearing of your fame; and I hope that you will regard me as one of your warmest friends. You ought to have visited us long ago, and made yourself at home with us; but now, from this day forward, as we have at last found one another out, do as I say—come and make acquaintance with me, and with these young men, that I may continue your friend, as I was your father's. I shall expect you to do so, and shall venture at some future time to remind you of your duty. But what say you of the matter of which we were beginning to speak—the art of fighting in armour? Is it a practice in which the lads may be advantageously instructed?

Soc. I will endeavour to advise you, Lysimachus, as far as I can in this matter, and also in every way will comply with your wishes; but as I am younger and not so experienced, I think that I ought certainly to hear first what my elders have to say, and to learn of them, and if I have anything to add, then I may venture to give my opinion to them as well as to you. Suppose, Nicias, that one or other of you begin.

Nicias thinks that the art is an excellent gymnastic, and of the greatest value when the soldier is fighting singly; it will arouse in him noble thoughts, and will enable him to make a better figure in battle.

Nic. I have no objection, Socrates; and my opinion is that the acquirement of this art is in many ways useful to young men. It is an advantage to them that among the favourite amusements of their leisure hours they should have one which tends to improve and not to injure their bodily health. No gymnastics could be better or harder exercise; and this, and 182
the art of riding, are of all arts most befitting to a freeman; for they only who are thus trained in the use of arms are the athletes of our military profession, trained in that on which the conflict turns. Moreover in actual battle, when you have to fight in a line with a number of others, such an acquirement will be of some use, and will be of the greatest whenever the ranks are broken and you have to fight singly, either in pursuit, when you are attacking some one who is defending himself, or in flight, when you have to defend yourself against an

assailant. Certainly he who possessed the art could not meet with any harm at the hands of a single person, or perhaps of several; and in any case he would have a great advantage. Further, this sort of skill inclines a man to the love of other noble lessons; for every man who has learned how to fight in armour will desire to learn the proper arrangement of an army, which is the sequel of the lesson: and when he has learned this, and his ambition is once fired, he will go on to learn the complete art of the general. There is no difficulty in seeing that the knowledge and practice of other military arts will be honourable and valuable to a man; and this lesson may be the beginning of them. Let me add a further advantage, which is by no means a slight one,—that this science will make any man a great deal more valiant and self-possessed in the field. And I will not disdain to mention, what by some may be thought to be a small matter;—he will make a better appearance at the right time; that is to say, at the time when his appearance will strike terror into his enemies. My opinion then, Lysimachus, is, as I say, that the youths should be instructed in this art, and for the reasons which I have given. But Laches may take a different view; and I shall be very glad to hear what he has to say.

Laches.

Nicias, Laches.

La. I should not like to maintain, Nicias, that any kind of knowledge is not to be learned; for all knowledge appears to be a good: and if, as Nicias and as the teachers of the art affirm, this use of arms is really a species of knowledge, then it ought to be learned; but if not, and if those who profess to teach it are deceivers only; or if it be knowledge, but not of a valuable sort, then what is the use of learning it?
183 I say this, because I think that if it had been really valuable, the Lacedaemonians, whose whole life is passed in finding out and practising the arts which give them an advantage over other nations in war, would have discovered this one. And even if they had not, still these professors of the art would certainly not have failed to discover that of all the Hellenes the Lacedaemonians have the greatest interest in such matters, and that a master of the art who was honoured among them would be sure to make his fortune among other nations, just as a tragic poet would who is honoured among

Laches attaches no importance to the art, which would have long ago been discovered by the Lacedaemonians, and would have been introduced among them, if it had been of any value.

Laches.

LACHES. ourselves; which is the reason why he who fancies that he can write a tragedy does not go about itinerating in the neighbouring states, but rushes hither straight, and exhibits at Athens; and this is natural. Whereas I perceive that these fighters in armour regard Lacedaemon as a sacred inviolable territory, which they do not touch with the point of their foot; but they make a circuit of the neighbouring states, and would rather exhibit to any others than to the Spartans; and particularly to those who would themselves acknowledge that they are by no means firstrate in the arts of war. Further, Lysimachus, I have encountered a good many of these gentlemen in actual service, and have taken their measure, which I can give you at once; for none of these masters of fence have ever been distinguished in war,—there has been a sort of fatality about them; while in all other arts the men of note have been always those who have practised the art, they appear to be a most unfortunate exception. For example, this very Stesilaus, whom you and I have just witnessed exhibiting in all that crowd and making such great professions of his powers, I have seen at another time making, in sober truth, an involuntary exhibition of himself, which was a far better spectacle. He was a marine on board a ship which struck a transport vessel, and was armed with a weapon, half spear, half scythe; the singularity of the weapon was worthy of the singularity of the man. To make a long story short, I will only tell you what happened to this notable invention of the scythe-spear. He was fighting, and the scythe was caught in the rigging of the other ship, and stuck fast; and he tugged, but was unable to get his weapon free. The two ships were passing one another. He first ran along his own ship holding on to the spear; but as the other ship passed by and drew him after as he was holding on, he let the spear slip through his hand until he 184
retained only the end of the handle. The people in the transport clapped their hands, and laughed at his ridiculous figure; and when some one threw a stone, which fell on the deck at his feet, and he quitted his hold of the scythe-spear, the crew of his own trireme also burst out laughing; they could not refrain when they beheld the weapon waving in the air, suspended from the transport. Now I do not deny that

These masters of fence never venture on Lacedaemonian ground.

Laches had seen this same Stesilaus cutting a very ridiculous figure in a naval engagement.

Laches.

Socrates, Lysimachus, Melesias.

there may be something in such an art, as Nicias asserts, but I tell you my experience; and, as I said at first, whether this be an art of which the advantage is so slight, or not an art at all, but only an imposition, in either case such an acquirement is not worth having. For my opinion is, that if the professor of this art be a coward, he will be likely to become rash, and his character will be only more notorious; or if he be brave, and fail ever so little, other men will be on the watch, and he will be greatly traduced; for there is a jealousy of such pretenders; and unless a man be pre-eminent in valour, he cannot help being ridiculous, if he says that he has this sort of skill. Such is my judgment, Lysimachus, of the desirableness of this art; but, as I said at first, ask Socrates, and do not let him go until he has given you his opinion of the matter.

The art an imposition.

Lys. I was going to ask this favour of you, Socrates; as is the more necessary because the two councillors disagree, and some one is in a manner still needed who will decide between them. Had they agreed, no arbiter would have been required. But as Laches has voted one way and Nicias another, I should like to hear with which of our two friends you agree.

Our two councillors disagree, and therefore we must appeal to Socrates.

Soc. What, Lysimachus, are you going to accept the opinion of the majority?

What, and are we to decide by a majority?

Lys. Why, yes, Socrates; what else am I to do?

Soc. And would you do so too, Melesias? If you were deliberating about the gymnastic training of your son, would you follow the advice of the majority of us, or the opinion of the one who had been trained and exercised under a skilful master?

Mel. The latter, Socrates; as would surely be reasonable.

No, the opinion of one expert is worth that of all the rest.

Soc. His one vote would be worth more than the vote of all us four?

Mel. Certainly.

Soc. And for this reason, as I imagine,—because a good decision is based on knowledge and not on numbers?

Mel. To be sure.

185 *Soc.* Must we not then first of all ask, whether there is any one of us who has knowledge of that about which we are deliberating? If there is, let us take his advice, though he be one only, and not mind the rest; if there is not, let us seek

Laches.

SOCRATES, MELESIAS, NICIAS.

further counsel. Is this a slight matter about which you and Lysimachus are deliberating? Are you not risking the greatest of your possessions? For children are your riches; and upon their turning out well or ill depends the whole order of their father's house.

Mel. That is true.

Soc. Great care, then, is required in this matter?

Mel. Certainly.

What is the question?

Soc. Suppose, as I was just now saying, that we were considering, or wanting to consider, who was the best trainer. Should we not select him who knew and had practised the art, and had the best teachers?

Mel. I think that we should.

Soc. But would there not arise a prior question about the nature of the art of which we want to find the masters?

Mel. I do not understand.

Soc. Let me try to make my meaning plainer then. I do not think that we have as yet decided what that is about which we are consulting, when we ask which of us is or is not skilled in the art, and has or has not had a teacher of the art.

Nic. Why, Socrates, is not the question whether young men ought or ought not to learn the art of fighting in armour?

There are two questions, one relating to the means and the other to the end.

Soc. Yes, Nicias; but there is also a prior question, which I may illustrate in this way: When a person considers about applying a medicine to the eyes, would you say that he is consulting about the medicine or about the eyes?

Nic. About the eyes.

Soc. And when he considers whether he shall set a bridle on a horse and at what time, he is thinking of the horse and not of the bridle?

Nic. True.

Soc. And in a word, when he considers anything for the sake of another thing, he thinks of the end and not of the means?

Nic. Certainly.

Soc. And when you call in an adviser, you should see whether he too is skilful in the accomplishment of the end which you have in view?

Nic. Most true.

Soc. And at present we have in view some knowledge, of which the end is the soul of youth?

Nic. Yes.

Soc. And we are enquiring, Which of us is skilful or successful in the treatment of the soul, and which of us has had good teachers?

La. Well but, Socrates; did you never observe that some persons, who have had no teachers, are more skilful than those who have, in some things?

Soc. Yes, Laches, I have observed that; but you would not be very willing to trust them if they only professed to be masters of their art, unless they could show some proof of
186 their skill or excellence in one or more works.

La. Quite true.

Soc. And therefore, Laches and Nicias, as Lysimachus and Melesias, in their anxiety to improve the minds of their sons, have asked our advice about them, we too should tell them who our teachers were, if we say that we have had any, and prove them to be in the first place men of merit and experienced trainers of the minds of youth and also to have been really our teachers. Or if any of us says that he has no teacher, but that he has works of his own to show; then he should point out to them what Athenians or strangers, bond or free, he is generally acknowledged to have improved. But if he can show neither teachers nor works, then he should tell them to look out for others; and not run the risk of spoiling the children of friends, and thereby incurring the most formidable accusation which can be brought against any one by those nearest to him. As for myself, Lysimachus and Melesias, I am the first to confess that I have never had a teacher of the art of virtue; although I have always from my earliest youth desired to have one. But I am too poor to give money to the Sophists, who are the only professors of moral improvement; and to this day I have never been able to discover the art myself, though I should not be surprised if Nicias or Laches may have discovered or learned it; for they are far wealthier than I am, and may therefore have learnt of others. And they are older, too; so that they have had more time to make the discovery. And I really

Laches.

NICIAS, SOCRATES, LACHES. The means is some kind of knowledge; the end the improvement of the soul of youth.

Which of us can teach and has had good teachers?

We must either tell who our teachers are, or appeal to works of our own.

Socrates could never afford a teacher, but Nicias and Laches may have learned of the Sophists, and their opinions might be of value if they only agreed with one another.

Laches. believe that they are able to educate a man; for unless they had been confident in their own knowledge, they would never have spoken thus decidedly of the pursuits which are advantageous or hurtful to a young man. I repose confidence in both of them; but I am surprised to find that they differ from one another. And therefore, Lysimachus, as Laches suggested that you should detain me, and not let me go until I answered, I in turn earnestly beseech and advise you to detain Laches and Nicias, and question them. I would have you say to them: Socrates avers that he has no knowledge of the matter—he is unable to decide which of you speaks truly; neither discoverer nor student is he of anything of the kind. But you, Laches and Nicias, should each of you tell us who is the most skilful educator whom you have ever known; and whether you invented the art yourselves, or learned of another; and if you learned, who were your 187
respective teachers, and who were their brothers in the art; and then, if you are too much occupied in politics to teach us yourselves, let us go to them, and present them with gifts, or make interest with them, or both, in the hope that they may be induced to take charge of our children and of yours; and then they will not grow up inferior, and disgrace their ancestors. But if you are yourselves original discoverers in that field, give us some proof of your skill. Who are they who, having been inferior persons, have become under your care good and noble? For if this is your first attempt at education, there is a danger that you may be trying the experiment, not on the 'vile corpus' of a Carian slave, but on your own sons, or the sons of your friend, and, as the proverb says, 'break the large vessel in learning to make pots.' Tell us then, what qualities you claim or do not claim. Make them tell you that, Lysimachus, and do not let them off.

Socrates, Lysimachus.

Who were their teachers, or do they experiment for themselves?

In the latter case they should be warned against trying experiments on their own children.

Lys. I very much approve of the words of Socrates, my friends; but you, Nicias and Laches, must determine whether you will be questioned, and give an explanation about matters of this sort. Assuredly, I and Melesias would be greatly pleased to hear you answer the questions which Socrates asks, if you will: for I began by saying that we took you into our counsels because we thought that you would have attended to the subject, especially as you have children who,

Lysimachus suggests that Socrates shall interrogate Nicias and Laches.

like our own, are nearly of an age to be educated. Well, then, if you have no objection, suppose that you take Socrates into partnership; and do you and he ask and answer one another's questions: for, as he has well said, we are deliberating about the most important of our concerns. I hope that you will see fit to comply with our request.

Laches.

NICIAS, LYSIMACHUS, LACHES.

Nic. I see very clearly, Lysimachus, that you have only known Socrates' father, and have no acquaintance with Socrates himself: at least, you can only have known him when he was a child, and may have met him among his fellow-wardsmen, in company with his father, at a sacrifice, or at some other gathering. You clearly show that you have never known him since he arrived at manhood.

Socrates will be sure to ask you about your soul.

Lys. Why do you say that, Nicias?

Nic. Because you seem not to be aware that any one who has an intellectual affinity to Socrates and enters into conversation with him is liable to be drawn into an argument; and whatever subject he may start, he will be continually carried round and round by him, until at last he finds that he has to
188 give an account both of his present and past life; and when he is once entangled, Socrates will not let him go until he has completely and thoroughly sifted him. Now I am used to his ways; and I know that he will certainly do as I say, and also that I myself shall be the sufferer; for I am fond of his conversation, Lysimachus. And I think that there is no harm in being reminded of any wrong thing which we are, or have been, doing: he who does not fly from reproof will be sure to take more heed of his after-life; as Solon says, he will wish and desire to be learning so long as he lives, and will not think that old age of itself brings wisdom. To me, to be cross-examined by Socrates is neither unusual nor unpleasant; indeed, I knew all along that where Socrates was, the argument would soon pass from our sons to ourselves; and therefore, I say that for my part, I am quite willing to discourse with Socrates in his own manner; but you had better ask our friend Laches what his feeling may be.

Nicias is of opinion that such conversation is very profitable.

Laches, like Nicias, is very ready to be cross-examined, especially by a true man whose deeds correspond with his actions.

La. I have but one feeling, Nicias, or (shall I say?) two feelings, about discussions. Some would think that I am a lover, and to others I may seem to be a hater of discourse; for when I hear a man discoursing of virtue, or of any sort

Laches.

LACHES, SOCRATES, LYSIMACHUS.

of wisdom, who is a true man and worthy of his theme, I am delighted beyond measure: and I compare the man and his words, and note the harmony and correspondence of them. And such an one I deem to be the true musician, attuned to a fairer harmony than that of the lyre, or any pleasant instrument of music; for truly he has in his own life a harmony of words and deeds arranged, not in the Ionian, or in the Phrygian mode, nor yet in the Lydian, but in the true Hellenic mode, which is the Dorian, and no other. Such an one makes me merry with the sound of his voice; and when I hear him I am thought to be a lover of discourse; so eager am I in drinking in his words. But a man whose actions do not agree with his words is an annoyance to me; and the better he speaks the more I hate him, and then I seem to be a hater of discourse. As to Socrates, I have no knowledge of his words, but of old, as would seem, I have had experience of his deeds; and his deeds show that free and noble sentiments are natural to him. 18
And if his words accord, then I am of one mind with him, and shall be delighted to be interrogated by a man such as he is, and shall not be annoyed at having to learn of him: for I too agree with Solon, 'that I would fain grow old, learning many things.' But I must be allowed to add 'of the good only.' Socrates must be willing to allow that he is a good teacher, or I shall be a dull and uncongenial pupil: but that the teacher is younger, or not as yet in repute—anything of that sort is of no account with me. And therefore, Socrates, I give you notice that you may teach and confute me as much as ever you like, and also learn of me anything which I know. So high is the opinion which I have entertained of you ever since the day on which you were my companion in danger, and gave a proof of your valour such as only the man of merit can give. Therefore, say whatever you like, and do not mind about the difference of our ages.

He is willing like Solon 'to learn many things,' but of the good only.

Soc. I cannot say that either of you show any reluctance to take counsel and advise with me.

Lys. But this is our proper business; and yours as well as ours, for I reckon you as one of us. Please then to take my place, and find out from Nicias and Laches what we want to

Lysimachus retires from the argument.

know, for the sake of the youths, and talk and consult with them: for I am old, and my memory is bad; and I do not remember the questions which I am going to ask, or the answers to them; and if there is any interruption I am quite lost. I will therefore beg of you to carry on the proposed discussion by your selves; and I will listen, and Melesias and I will act upon your conclusions.

SOCRATES, LACHES.

Soc. Let us, Nicias and Laches, comply with the request of Lysimachus and Melesias. There will be no harm in asking ourselves the question which was first proposed to us: 'Who have been our own instructors in this sort of training, and whom have we made better?' But the other mode of carrying on the enquiry will bring us equally to the same point, and will be more like proceeding from first principles. For if we knew that the addition of something would improve some other thing, and were able to make the addition, then, clearly, we must know how that about which we are advising may be best and most easily attained. Perhaps you do not understand what I mean. Then let me
190 make my meaning plainer in this way. Suppose we knew that the addition of sight makes better the eyes which possess this gift, and also were able to impart sight to the eyes, then, clearly, we should know the nature of sight, and should be able to advise how this gift of sight may be best and most easily attained; but if we knew neither what sight is, nor what hearing is, we should not be very good medical advisers about the eyes or the ears, or about the best mode of giving sight and hearing to them.

Socrates proceeds:—Before we can impart a gift we must know the nature of it.

La. That is true, Socrates.

Soc. And are not our two friends, Laches, at this very moment inviting us to consider in what way the gift of virtue may be imparted to their sons for the improvement of their minds?

La. Very true.

Soc. Then must we not first know the nature of virtue? For how can we advise any one about the best mode of attaining something of which we are wholly ignorant?

If we would impart virtue we must know the nature of virtue.

La. I do not think that we can, Socrates.

Soc. Then, Laches, we may presume that we know the nature of virtue?

La. Yes.

Laches.

SOCRATES, LACHES.

Soc. And that which we know we must surely be able to tell?

La. Certainly.

Soc. I would not have us begin, my friend, with enquiring about the whole of virtue; for that may be more than we can accomplish; let us first consider whether we have a sufficient knowledge of a part; the enquiry will thus probably be made easier to us.

La. Let us do as you say, Socrates.

And the particular virtue with which we are at present concerned is courage.

Soc. Then which of the parts of virtue shall we select? Must we not select the one to which the art of fighting in armour is supposed to conduce? And is not that generally thought to be courage?

La. Yes, certainly.

Soc. Then, Laches, suppose that we first set about determining the nature of courage, and in the second place proceed to enquire how the young men may attain this quality by the help of studies and pursuits. Tell me, if you can, what is courage.

La. Indeed, Socrates, I see no difficulty in answering; he who does not run away, but remains at his post and fights against the enemy,—he surely is a man of courage.

Who is the courageous man?

Soc. Very good, Laches; and yet I fear that I did not express myself clearly; and therefore you have answered not the question which I intended to ask, but another.

La. What do you mean, Socrates? 191

(1) He who stands and fights; and also

Soc. I will endeavour to explain; you would call a man courageous who remains at his post, and fights with the enemy?

La. Certainly I should.

(2) he who flies and fights.

Soc. And so should I; but what would you say of another man, who fights flying, instead of remaining?

La. How flying?

Soc. Why, as the Scythians are said to fight, flying as well as pursuing; and as Homer says in praise of the horses of Aeneas, that they knew 'how to pursue, and fly quickly hither and thither;' and he passes an encomium on Aeneas himself, as having a knowledge of fear or flight, and calls him 'an author of fear or flight.'

La. Yes, Socrates, and there Homer is right: for he was

speaking of chariots, as you were speaking of the Scythian cavalry, who have that way of fighting; but the heavy-armed Greek fights, as I say, remaining in his rank.

Soc. And yet, Laches, you must except the Lacedaemonians at Plataea, who, when they came upon the light shields of the Persians, are said not to have been willing to stand and fight, and to have fled; but when the ranks of the Persians were broken, they turned upon them like cavalry, and won the battle of Plataea.

La. That is true.

Soc. That was my meaning when I said that I was to blame in having put my question badly, and that this was the reason of your answering badly. For I meant to ask you not only about the courage of heavy-armed soldiers, but about the courage of cavalry and every other style of soldier; and not only who are courageous in war, but who are courageous in perils by sea, and who in disease, or in poverty, or again in politics, are courageous; and not only who are courageous against pain or fear, but mighty to contend against desires and pleasures, either fixed in their rank or turning upon their enemy. There is this sort of courage — is there not, Laches?

Courage is also shown in perils by sea, in disease and poverty, and in civil strife; also in the battle against pleasures and desires.

La. Certainly, Socrates.

Soc. And all these are courageous, but some have courage in pleasures, and some in pains: some in desires, and some in fears, and some are cowards under the same conditions, as I should imagine.

La. Very true.

Soc. Now I was asking about courage and cowardice in general. And I will begin with courage, and once more ask, What is that common quality, which is the same in all these cases, and which is called courage? Do you now understand what I mean?

La. Not over well.

192 *Soc.* I mean this: As I might ask what is that quality which is called quickness, and which is found in running, in playing the lyre, in speaking, in learning, and in many other similar actions, or rather which we possess in nearly every action that is worth mentioning of arms, legs, mouth,

Laches. voice, mind;—would you not apply the term quickness to all of them?

SOCRATES, LACHES.

La. Quite true.

Soc. And suppose I were to be asked by some one: What is that common quality, Socrates, which, in all these uses of the word, you call quickness? I should say the quality which accomplishes much in a little time—whether in running, speaking, or in any other sort of action.

What is that common quality in all, which is called courage?

La. You would be quite correct.

Soc. And now, Laches, do you try and tell me in like manner, What is that common quality which is called courage, and which includes all the various uses of the term when applied both to pleasure and pain, and in all the cases to which I was just now referring?

Endurance.

La. I should say that courage is a sort of endurance of the soul, if I am to speak of the universal element which pervades them all.

Soc. But that is what we must do if we are to answer the question. And yet I cannot say that every kind of endurance is, in my opinion, to be deemed courage. Hear my reason: I am sure, Laches, that you would consider courage to be a very noble quality.

La. Most noble, certainly.

Soc. And you would say that a wise endurance is also good and noble?

La. Very noble.

Soc. But what would you say of a foolish endurance? Is not that, on the other hand, to be regarded as evil and hurtful?

La. True.

Soc. And is anything noble which is evil and hurtful?

La. It would be wrong, Socrates, to say so.

Yes, but it must be a noble or wise endurance.

Soc. Then you would not admit that sort of endurance to be courage—for it is not noble, but courage is noble?

La. You are right.

Soc. Then, according to you, only the wise endurance is courage?

La. True.

Soc. But as to the epithet 'wise,'—wise in what? In all things small as well as great? For example, if a man

shows the quality of endurance in spending his money wisely, knowing that by spending he will acquire more in the end, do you call him courageous? *Laches.* SOCRATES, LACHES.

La. Assuredly not.

Soc. Or, for example, if a man is a physician, and his son, or some patient of his, has inflammation of the lungs, and begs that he may be allowed to eat or drink something, and the other is firm and refuses; is that courage?

193 *La.* Not at all, any more than the last.

Soc. Again, take the case of one who endures in war, and is willing to fight, and wisely calculates and knows that others will help him, and that there will be fewer and inferior men against him than there are with him; and suppose that he has also advantages of position;—would you say of such a one who endures with all this wisdom and preparation, that he, or some man in the opposing army who is in the opposite circumstances to these and yet endures and remains at his post, is the braver? Is he who by prudent foresight escapes a danger, or he who, having no foresight, endures and remains at his post, the braver?

La. I should say that the latter, Socrates, was the braver. The latter.

Soc. But, surely, this is a foolish endurance in comparison with the other?

La. That is true.

Soc. Then you would say that he who in an engagement of cavalry endures, having the knowledge of horsemanship, is not so courageous as he who endures, having no such knowledge?

La. So I should say.

Soc. And he who endures, having a knowledge of the use of the sling, or the bow, or of any other art, is not so courageous as he who endures, not having such a knowledge?

La. True.

Soc. And he who descends into a well, and dives, and holds out in this or any similar action, having no knowledge of diving, or the like, is, as you would say, more courageous than those who have this knowledge?

La. Why, Socrates, what else can a man say?

Soc. Nothing, if that be what he thinks.

La. But that is what I do think.

Laches.

SOCRATES, LACHES.

Soc. And yet men who thus run risks and endure are foolish, Laches, in comparison of those who do the same things, having the skill to do them.

La. That is true.

And yet he is the more foolish.

Soc. But foolish boldness and endurance appeared before to be base and hurtful to us.

La. Quite true.

Soc. Whereas courage was acknowledged to be a noble quality.

La. True.

Soc. And now on the contrary we are saying that the foolish endurance, which was before held in dishonour, is courage.

La. Very true.

This conclusion can never be right.

Soc. And are we right in saying so?

La. Indeed, Socrates, I am sure that we are not right.

Soc. Then according to your statement, you and I, Laches, are not attuned to the Dorian mode, which is a harmony of words and deeds; for our deeds are not in accordance with our words. Any one would say that we had courage who saw us in action, but not, I imagine, he who heard us talking about courage just now.

La. That is most true.

Soc. And is this condition of ours satisfactory?

La. Quite the reverse.

Soc. Suppose, however, that we admit the principle of which we are speaking to a certain extent.

La. To what extent and what principle do you mean? 194

And yet if we show endurance we may very likely discover that courage after all is endurance.

Soc. The principle of endurance. We too must endure and persevere in the enquiry, and then courage will not laugh at our faint-heartedness in searching for courage; which after all may, very likely, be endurance.

La. I am ready to go on, Socrates; and yet I am unused to investigations of this sort. But the spirit of controversy has been aroused in me by what has been said; and I am really grieved at being thus unable to express my meaning. For I fancy that I do know the nature of courage; but, somehow or other, she has slipped away from me, and I cannot get hold of her and tell her nature.

Soc. But, my dear friend, should not the good sportsman follow the track, and not be lazy?

La. Certainly, he should. *Laches.*

Soc. And shall we invite Nicias to join us? he may be better at the sport than we are. What do you say? SOCRATES, LACHES, NICIAS.

La. I should like to invite him.

Soc. Come then, Nicias, and do what you can to help your friends, who are tossing on the waves of argument, and at the last gasp: you see our extremity, and may save us and also settle your own opinion, if you will tell us what you think about courage. Nicias is invited to join in the enquiry.

Nic. I have been thinking, Socrates, that you and Laches are not defining courage in the right way; for you have forgotten an excellent saying which I have heard from your own lips. He suggests that courage is a sort of wisdom.

Soc. What is it, Nicias?

Nic. I have often heard you say that 'Every man is good in that in which he is wise, and bad in that in which he is unwise.'

Soc. That is certainly true, Nicias.

Nic. And therefore if the brave man is good, he is also wise.

Soc. Do you hear him, Laches?

La. Yes, I hear him, but I do not very well understand him.

Soc. I think that I understand him; and he appears to me to mean that courage is a sort of wisdom.

La. What can he possibly mean, Socrates?

Soc. That is a question which you must ask of himself.

La. Yes.

Soc. Tell him then, Nicias, what you mean by this wisdom; for you surely do not mean the wisdom which plays the flute?

Nic. Certainly not.

Soc. Nor the wisdom which plays the lyre?

Nic. No.

Soc. But what is this knowledge then, and of what?

La. I think that you put the question to him very well, Socrates; and I would like him to say what is the nature of this knowledge or wisdom. Courage is the knowledge which inspires fear or confidence in war, or in anything.

195 *Nic.* I mean to say, Laches, that courage is the knowledge of that which inspires fear or confidence in war, or in anything.

Laches. *La.* How strangely he is talking, Socrates.

SOCRATES, LACHES, NICIAS. *Soc.* Why do you say so, Laches?

La. Why, surely courage is one thing, and wisdom another.

Soc. That is just what Nicias denies.

La. Yes, that is what he denies; but he is so silly.

Soc. Suppose that we instruct instead of abusing him?

Nic. Laches does not want to instruct me, Socrates; but having been proved to be talking nonsense himself, he wants to prove that I have been doing the same.

Physicians know the dangers of disease. Are they then the same with the courageous?

La. Very true, Nicias; and you are talking nonsense, as I shall endeavour to show. Let me ask you a question: Do not physicians know the dangers of disease? or do the courageous know them? or are the physicians the same as the courageous?

Nic. Not at all.

La. No more than the husbandmen who know the dangers of husbandry, or than other craftsmen, who have a knowledge of that which inspires them with fear or confidence in their own arts, and yet they are not courageous a whit the more for that.

Soc. What is Laches saying, Nicias? He appears to be saying something of importance.

Nic. Yes, he is saying something, but it is not true.

Soc. How so?

The physicians can only tell the nature of disease, not whether health is better than disease, life than death.

Nic. Why, because he does not see that the physician's knowledge only extends to the nature of health and disease: he can tell the sick man no more than this. Do you imagine, Laches, that the physician knows whether health or disease is the more terrible to a man? Had not many a man better never get up from a sick bed? I should like to know whether you think that life is always better than death. May not death often be the better of the two?

La. Yes certainly so in my opinion.

Nic. And do you think that the same things are terrible to those who had better die, and to those who had better live?

La. Certainly not.

Nic. And do you suppose that the physician or any other artist knows this, or any one indeed, except he who is skilled

in the grounds of fear and hope? And him I call the courageous. *Laches.*

SOCRATES, LACHES, NICIAS.

Soc. Do you understand his meaning, Laches?

La. Yes; I suppose that, in his way of speaking, the soothsayers are courageous. For who but one of them can know to whom to die or to live is better? And yet, Nicias, would you allow that you are yourself a soothsayer, or are you neither a soothsayer nor courageous?

Nay, the soothsayer only knows what will be best.

Nic. What! do you mean to say that the soothsayer ought to know the grounds of hope or fear?

La. Indeed I do: who but he?

Nic. Much rather I should say he of whom I speak; for the soothsayer ought to know only the signs of things that are about to come to pass, whether death or disease, or loss of
196 property, or victory, or defeat in war, or in any sort of contest; but to whom the suffering or not suffering of these things will be for the best, can no more be decided by the soothsayer than by one who is no soothsayer.

The soothsayer only knows the signs of the future.

La. I cannot understand what Nicias would be at, Socrates; for he represents the courageous man as neither a soothsayer, nor a physician, nor in any other character, unless he means to say that he is a god. My opinion is that he does not like honestly to confess that he is talking nonsense, but that he shuffles up and down in order to conceal the difficulty into which he has got himself. You and I, Socrates, might have practised a similar shuffle just now, if we had only wanted to avoid the appearance of inconsistency. And if we had been arguing in a court of law there might have been reason in so doing; but why should a man deck himself out with vain words at a meeting of friends such as this?

According to Laches, Nicias is talking nonsense.

Soc. I quite agree with you, Laches, that he should not. But perhaps Nicias is serious, and not merely talking for the sake of talking. Let us ask him just to explain what he means, and if he has reason on his side we will agree with him; if not, we will instruct him.

La. Do you, Socrates, if you like, ask him: I think that I have asked enough.

Soc. I do not see why I should not; and my question will do for both of us.

Laches. *La.* Very good.

SOCRATES, LACHES, NICIAS. *Soc.* Then tell me, Nicias, or rather tell us, for Laches and I are partners in the argument: Do you mean to affirm that courage is the knowledge of the grounds of hope and fear?

Nic. I do.

Socrates undertakes to cross-examine him. *Soc.* And not every man has this knowledge; the physician and the soothsayer have it not; and they will not be courageous unless they acquire it — that is what you were saying?

Nic. I was.

Soc. Then this is certainly not a thing which every pig would know, as the proverb says, and therefore he could not be courageous.

Nic. I think not.

If courage is wisdom, no animal is courageous. *Soc.* Clearly not, Nicias; not even such a big pig as the Crommyonian sow would be called by you courageous. And this I say not as a joke, but because I think that he who assents to your doctrine, that courage is the knowledge of the grounds of fear and hope, cannot allow that any wild beast is courageous, unless he admits that a lion, or a leopard, or perhaps a boar, or any other animal, has such a degree of wisdom that he knows things which but a few human beings ever know by reason of their difficulty. He who takes your view of courage must affirm that a lion, and a stag, and a bull, and a monkey, have equally little pretensions to courage.

La. Capital, Socrates; by the gods, that is truly good. 197
And I hope, Nicias, that you will tell us whether these animals, which we all admit to be courageous, are really wiser than mankind; or whether you will have the boldness, in the face of universal opinion, to deny their courage.

Thoughtful courage is a very rare quality. *Nic.* Why, Laches, I do not call animals or any other things which have no fear of dangers, because they are ignorant of them, courageous, but only fearless and senseless. Do you imagine that I should call little children courageous, which fear no dangers because they know none? There is a difference, to my way of thinking, between fearlessness and courage. I am of opinion that thoughtful courage is a quality possessed by very few, but that rashness and boldness, and fearlessness, which have no forethought, are very common qualities possessed by many men, many women, many

children, many animals. And you, and men in general, call by the term 'courageous' actions which I call rash;—my courageous actions are wise actions. *Laches.* SOCRATES, LACHES, NICIAS.

La. Behold, Socrates, how admirably, as he thinks, he dresses himself out in words, while seeking to deprive of the honour of courage those whom all the world acknowledges to be courageous.

Nic. Not so, Laches, but do not be alarmed; for I am quite willing to say of you and also of Lamachus, and of many other Athenians, that you are courageous and therefore wise.

La. I could answer that; but I would not have you cast in my teeth that I am a haughty Aexonian.

Soc. Do not answer him, Laches; I rather fancy that you are not aware of the source from which his wisdom is derived. He has got all this from my friend Damon, and Damon is always with Prodicus, who, of all the Sophists, is considered to be the best puller to pieces of words of this sort.

La. Yes, Socrates; and the examination of such niceties is a much more suitable employment for a Sophist than for a great statesman whom the city chooses to preside over her.

Soc. Yes, my sweet friend, but a great statesman is likely to have a great intelligence. And I think that the view which is implied in Nicias' definition of courage is worthy of examination.

La. Then examine for yourself, Socrates.

Soc. That is what I am going to do, my dear friend. Do not, however, suppose I shall let you out of the partnership; for I shall expect you to apply your mind, and join with me in the consideration of the question.

La. I will if you think that I ought.

98 *Soc.* Yes, I do; but I must beg of you, Nicias, to begin again. You remember that we originally considered courage to be a part of virtue. We must begin again: (1) Courage is a part of virtue.

Nic. Very true.

Soc. And you yourself said that it was a part; and there were many other parts, all of which taken together are called virtue.

Nic. Certainly.

Soc. Do you agree with me about the parts? For I say

Laches.

SOCRATES, LACHES, NICIAS.

(2) Courage is a knowledge of good and evil in the future.

that justice, temperance, and the like, are all of them parts of virtue as well as courage. Would you not say the same?

Nic. Certainly.

Soc. Well then, so far we are agreed. And now let us proceed a step, and try to arrive at a similar agreement about the fearful and the hopeful: I do not want you to be thinking one thing and myself another. Let me then tell you my own opinion, and if I am wrong you shall set me right: in my opinion the terrible and the hopeful are the things which do or do not create fear, and fear is not of the present, nor of the past, but is of future and expected evil. Do you not agree to that, Laches?

La. Yes, Socrates, entirely.

Soc. That is my view, Nicias; the terrible things, as I should say, are the evils which are future; and the hopeful are the good or not evil things which are future. Do you or do you not agree with me?

Nic. I agree.

Soc. And the knowledge of these things you call courage?

Nic. Precisely.

Soc. And now let me see whether you agree with Laches and myself as to a third point.

Nic. What is it?

(3) In the future, and equally in the past and in the present.

Soc. I will tell you. He and I have a notion that there is not one knowledge or science of the past, another of the present, a third of what is likely to be best and what will be best in the future; but that of all three there is one science only: for example, there is one science of medicine which is concerned with the inspection of health equally in all times, present, past, and future; and one science of husbandry in like manner, which is concerned with the productions of the earth in all times. As to the art of the general, you yourselves will be my witnesses that he has an excellent foreknowledge of the future, and that he claims to be the master and not the servant of the soothsayer, because he knows better what is happening or is 199
likely to happen in war: and accordingly the law places the soothsayer under the general, and not the general under the soothsayer. Am I not correct in saying so, Laches?

La. Quite correct.

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Soc. And do you, Nicias, also acknowledge that the same science has understanding of the same things, whether future, present, or past?

Nic. Yes, indeed, Socrates; that is my opinion.

Soc. And courage, my friend, is, as you say, a knowledge of the fearful and of the hopeful?

Nic. Yes.

Soc. And the fearful, and the hopeful, are admitted to be future goods and future evils?

Nic. True.

Soc. And the same science has to do with the same things in the future or at any time?

Nic. That is true.

Soc. Then courage is not the science which is concerned with the fearful and hopeful, for they are future only; courage, like the other sciences, is concerned not only with good and evil of the future, but of the present and past, and of any time?

Nic. That, as I suppose, is true.

Soc. Then the answer which you have given, Nicias, includes only a third part of courage; but our question extended to the whole nature of courage: and according to your view, that is, according to your present view, courage is not only the knowledge of the hopeful and the fearful, but seems to include nearly every good and evil without reference to time. What do you say to that alteration in your statement?

Nic. I agree, Socrates.

But if courage is the knowledge of the past, present, and future, it must comprehend all virtue.

Soc. But then, my dear friend, if a man knew all good and evil, and how they are, and have been, and will be produced, would he not be perfect, and wanting in no virtue, whether justice, or temperance, or holiness? He would possess them all, and he would know which were dangers and which were not, and guard against them whether they were supernatural or natural; and he would provide the good, as he would know how to deal both with gods or men.

Nic. I think, Socrates, that there is a great deal of truth in what you say.

Soc. But then, Nicias, courage, according to this new

Laches.

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definition of yours, instead of being a part of virtue only, will be all virtue?

Nic. It would seem so.

Soc. But we were saying that courage is one of the parts of virtue?

Nic. Yes, that was what we were saying.

Soc. And that is in contradiction with our present view?

Nic. Such appears to be the case.

Soc. Then, Nicias, we have not discovered what courage is.

Nic. We have not.

An altercation between Laches and Nicias.

La. And yet, friend Nicias, I imagined that you would have made the discovery, when you were so contemptuous of the answers which I made to Socrates. I had very great hopes that you would have been enlightened by the wisdom of Damon. 200

Nic. I perceive, Laches, that you think nothing of having displayed your ignorance of the nature of courage, but you look only to see whether I have not made a similar display; and if we are both equally ignorant of the things which a man who is good for anything should know, that, I suppose, will be of no consequence. You certainly appear to me very like the rest of the world, looking at your neighbour and not at yourself. I am of opinion that enough has been said on the subject which we have been discussing; and if anything has been imperfectly said, it may be hereafter corrected by the help of Damon, whom you think to laugh down, although you have never seen him, and with the help of others. And when I am satisfied myself, I will freely impart my satisfaction to you, for I think that you are very much in want of knowledge.

They agree in recommending Lysimachus and Melesias to refer the question respecting the education of their two boys to Socrates.

La. You are a philosopher, Nicias; of that I am aware: nevertheless I would recommend Lysimachus and Melesias not to take you and me as advisers about the education of their children; but, as I said at first, they should ask Socrates and not let him off; if my own sons were old enough, I would have asked him myself.

Nic. To that I quite agree, if Socrates is willing to take them under his charge. I should not wish for any one else to be the tutor of Niceratus. But I observe that when I mention the matter to him he recommends to me some other tutor and

refuses himself. Perhaps he may be more ready to listen to you, Lysimachus. *Laches.* SOCRATES, LYSIMACHUS.

Lys. He ought, Nicias: for certainly I would do things for him which I would not do for many others. What do you say, Socrates—will you comply? And are you ready to give assistance in the improvement of the youths?

Soc. Indeed, Lysimachus, I should be very wrong in refusing to aid in the improvement of anybody. And if I had shown in this conversation that I had a knowledge which Nicias and Laches have not, then I admit that you would be right in inviting me to perform this duty; but as we are all in the same perplexity, why should one of us be preferred to
201 another? I certainly think that no one should; and under these circumstances, let me offer you a piece of advice (and this need not go further than ourselves). I maintain, my friends, that every one of us should seek out the best teacher whom he can find, first for ourselves, who are greatly in need of one, and then for the youth, regardless of expense or anything. But I cannot advise that we remain as we are. And if any one laughs at us for going to school at our age, I would quote to them the authority of Homer, who says, that

Then, says Socrates, let us all go to school together.

'Modesty is not good for a needy man.'

Let us then, regardless of what may be said of us, make the education of the youths our own education.

Lys. I like your proposal, Socrates; and as I am the oldest, I am also the most eager to go to school with the boys. Let me beg a favour of you: Come to my house to-morrow at dawn, and we will advise about these matters. For the present, let us make an end of the conversation.

Soc. I will come to you to-morrow, Lysimachus, as you propose, God willing.

PROTAGORAS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Protagoras, like several of the Dialogues of Plato, is put into the mouth of Socrates, who describes a conversation which had taken place between himself and the great Sophist at the house of Callias —'the man who had spent more upon the Sophists than all the rest of the world' (Apol. 20 A), and in which the learned Hippias and the grammarian Prodicus had also shared, as well as Alcibiades and Critias, both of whom said a few words — in the presence of a distinguished company consisting of disciples of Protagoras and of leading Athenians belonging to the Socratic
Steph. circle. The dialogue commences with a request on the part of
310 Hippocrates that Socrates would introduce him to the celebrated teacher. He has come before the dawn had risen — so fervid is his
311 zeal. Socrates moderates his excitement and advises him to find out 'what Protagoras will make of him,' before he becomes his pupil.

314 They go together to the house of Callias; and Socrates, after explaining the purpose of their visit to Protagoras, asks the
318 question 'What he will make of Hippocrates?' Protagoras answers, 'That he will make him a better and a wiser man.' 'But in what will he be better?'— Socrates desires to have a more
319 precise answer. Protagoras replies, 'That he will teach him prudence in affairs private and public; in short, the science or knowledge of human life.'

This, as Socrates admits, is a noble profession: but he is or rather would have been doubtful, whether such knowledge can be taught, if Protagoras had not assured him of the fact, for two reasons: (1) Because the Athenian people, who recognize in their assemblies the distinction between the skilled and the unskilled in the arts, do not distinguish between the trained politician and

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the untrained; (2) Because the wisest and best Athenian citizens 320
do not teach their sons political virtue. Will Protagoras answer these objections?

Protagoras explains his views in the form of an apologue, in which, after Prometheus had given men the arts, Zeus is repre- 321
sented as sending Hermes to them, bearing with him Justice and Reverence. These are not, like the arts, to be imparted to a few 322
only, but all men are to be partakers of them. Therefore the 323
Athenian people are right in distinguishing between the skilled and unskilled in the arts, and not between skilled and unskilled politicians. (1) For all men have the political virtues to a certain degree, and are obliged to say that they have them, whether they have them or not. A man would be thought a madman who professed an art which he did not know; but he would be equally thought a madman if he did not profess a virtue which he had not. (2) And that the political virtues can be taught and acquired, in 324
the opinion of the Athenians, is proved by the fact that they punish evil-doers, with a view to prevention, of course — mere 325
retribution is for beasts, and not for men. (3) Again, would parents who teach their sons lesser matters leave them ignorant of the common duty of citizens? To the doubt of Socrates the best answer is the fact, that the education of youth in virtue begins almost as soon as they can speak, and is continued by the state 326
when they pass out of the parental control. (4) Nor need we wonder that wise and good fathers sometimes have foolish and worthless sons. Virtue, as we were saying, is not the private 327
possession of any man, but is shared by all, only however to the extent of which each individual is by nature capable. And, as a matter of fact, even the worst of civilized mankind will appear virtuous and just, if we compare them with savages. (5) The 328
error of Socrates lies in supposing that there are no teachers of virtue, whereas all men are teachers in a degree. Some like Protagoras are better than others, and with this result we ought to be satisfied.

Socrates is highly delighted with the explanation of Protagoras. 329
But he has still a doubt lingering in his mind. Protagoras has spoken of the virtues: are they many, or one? are they parts of a 330
whole, or different names of the same thing? Protagoras replies that they are parts, like the parts of a face, which have their

several functions, and no one part is like any other part. This admission, which has been somewhat hastily made, is now taken
331 up and cross-examined by Socrates:—

'Is justice just, and is holiness holy? And are justice and holiness unlike one another?'—'Then justice is unholy.' Protagoras would rather say that justice is different from holiness, and yet in a certain point of view nearly the same. He does not,
332 however, escape in this way from the cunning of Socrates, who inveigles him into an admission that everything has but one
333 opposite. Folly, for example, is opposed to wisdom; and folly is also opposed to temperance; and therefore temperance and wisdom are the same. And holiness has been already admitted to be nearly the same as justice. Temperance, therefore, has now to be compared with justice.

334 Protagoras, whose temper begins to get a little ruffled at the process to which he has been subjected, is aware that he will soon be compelled by the dialectics of Socrates to admit that the temperate is the just. He therefore defends himself with his favourite weapon; that is to say, he makes a long speech not much to the point, which elicits the applause of the audience.

Here occurs a sort of interlude, which commences with a
335 declaration on the part of Socrates that he cannot follow a long speech, and therefore he must beg Protagoras to speak shorter.
336 As Protagoras declines to accommodate him, he rises to depart, but is detained by Callias, who thinks him unreasonable in not allowing Protagoras the liberty which he takes himself of speaking as he likes. But Alcibiades answers that the two cases are not parallel. For Socrates admits his inability to speak long; will Protagoras in like manner acknowledge his inability to speak short?

337 Counsels of moderation are urged first in a few words by Critias, and then by Prodicus in balanced and sententious lan-
338 guage: and Hippias proposes an umpire. But who is to be the umpire? rejoins Socrates; he would rather suggest as a compromise that Protagoras shall ask and he will answer, and that when Protagoras is tired of asking he himself will ask and Protagoras
339 shall answer. To this the latter yields a reluctant assent.

Protagoras selects as his thesis a poem of Simonides of Ceos, in which he professes to find a contradiction. First the poet says,

'Hard is it to become good,'

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and then reproaches Pittacus for having said, 'Hard is it to be good.' How is this to be reconciled? Socrates, who is familiar with the poem, is embarrassed at first, and invokes the aid of Prodicus, the countryman of Simonides, but apparently only with 340
the intention of flattering him into absurdities. First a distinction is drawn between (*εἶναι*) to be, and (*γενέσθαι*) to become: to become good is difficult; to be good is easy. Then the word difficult or 341
hard is explained to mean 'evil' in the Cean dialect. To all this Prodicus assents; but when Protagoras reclaims, Socrates slily withdraws Prodicus from the fray, under the pretense that his assent was only intended to test the wits of his adversary. He then proceeds to give another and more elaborate explanation 342
of the whole passage. The explanation is as follows:—

The Lacedaemonians are great philosophers (although this is a fact which is not generally known); and the soul of their philosophy is brevity, which was also the style of primitive antiquity 343
and of the seven sages. Now Pittacus had a saying, 'Hard is it to be good:' and Simonides, who was jealous of the fame of this saying, wrote a poem which was designed to controvert it. No, 344
says he, Pittacus; not 'hard to be good,' but 'hard to become good.' Socrates proceeds to argue in a highly impressive manner 345
that the whole composition is intended as an attack upon Pittacus. This, though manifestly absurd, is accepted by the company, and 347
meets with the special approval of Hippias, who has however a favourite interpretation of his own, which he is requested by Alcibiades to defer.

The argument is now resumed, not without some disdainful remarks of Socrates on the practice of introducing the poets, who ought not to be allowed, any more than flute-girls, to come into good society. Men's own thoughts should supply them with the 348
materials for discussion. A few soothing flatteries are addressed to Protagoras by Callias and Socrates, and then the old question 349
is repeated, 'Whether the virtues are one or many?' To which Protagoras is now disposed to reply, that four out of the five virtues are in some degree similar; but he still contends that the fifth, courage, is unlike the rest. Socrates proceeds to undermine the last stronghold of the adversary, first obtaining from him the admission that all virtue is in the highest degree good:—

The courageous are the confident; and the confident are those 350

who know their business or profession: those who have no such knowledge and are still confident are madmen. This is admitted.
351 Then, says Socrates, courage is knowledge — an inference which Protagoras evades by drawing a futile distinction between the courageous and the confident in a fluent speech.

Socrates renews the attack from another side: he would like to know whether pleasure is not the only good, and pain the only evil? Protagoras seems to doubt the morality or propriety of assenting to this; he would rather say that 'some pleasures are good, some pains are evil,' which is also the opinion of the
352 generality of mankind. What does he think of knowledge? Does he agree with the common opinion that knowledge is overcome by passion? or does he hold that knowledge is power? Protagoras agrees that knowledge is certainly a governing power.

353 This, however, is not the doctrine of men in general, who maintain that many who know what is best, act contrary to their knowledge under the influence of pleasure. But this opposition of good and evil is really the opposition of a greater or lesser amount
354 of pleasure. Pleasures are evils because they end in pain, and pains are goods because they end in pleasures. Thus pleasure is seen to be the only good; and the only evil is the preference of
355 the lesser pleasure to the greater. But then comes in the illusion
359 of distance. Some art of mensuration is required in order to show us pleasures and pains in their true proportion. This art of mensuration is a kind of knowledge, and knowledge is thus proved once more to be the governing principle of human life, and ignorance the origin of all evil: for no one prefers the less pleasure to the greater, or the greater pain to the less, except from ignorance. The argument is drawn out in an imaginary 'dialogue within a dialogue,' conducted by Socrates and Protagoras on the one part, and the rest of the world on the other. Hippias and Prodicus, as well as Protagoras, admit the soundness of the conclusion.

Socrates then applies this new conclusion to the case of courage — the only virtue which still holds out against the assaults of the Socratic dialectic. No one chooses the evil or refuses the good except through ignorance. This explains why cowards refuse to go to war: — because they form a wrong estimate of good, and
360 honour, and pleasure. And why are the courageous willing to go to war? — because they form a right estimate of pleasures and

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pains, of things terrible and not terrible. Courage then is knowledge, and cowardice is ignorance. And the five virtues, which were originally maintained to have five different natures, after having been easily reduced to two only, at last coalesce in one. The assent of Protagoras to this last position is extracted with great difficulty. 361

Socrates concludes by professing his disinterested love of the truth, and remarks on the singular manner in which he and his adversary had changed sides. Protagoras began by asserting, and Socrates by denying, the teachableness of virtue, and now the latter ends by affirming that virtue is knowledge, which is the most teachable of all things, while Protagoras has been striving to show that virtue is not knowledge, and this is almost equivalent to saying that virtue cannot be taught. He is not satisfied with the result, and would like to renew the enquiry with the help of Protagoras in a different order, asking (1) What virtue is, and (2) Whether virtue can be taught. Protagoras declines this offer, but commends Socrates' earnestness and his style of discussion.

INTRODUCTION.

The Protagoras is often supposed to be full of difficulties. These are partly imaginary and partly real. The imaginary ones are (1) Chronological,— which were pointed out in ancient times by Athenaeus (v. 59), and are noticed by Schleiermacher and others, and relate to the impossibility of all the persons in the Dialogue meeting at any one time, whether in the year 425 B. C., or in any other. But Plato, like all writers of fiction, aims only at the probable, and shows in many Dialogues (e. g. the Symposium and Republic, and already in the Laches) an extreme disregard of the historical accuracy which is sometimes demanded of him. (2) The exact place of the Protagoras among the Dialogues, and the date of composition, have also been much disputed. But there are no criteria which afford any real grounds for determining the date of composition; and the affinities of the Dialogues, when they are not indicated by Plato himself, must always to a great extent remain uncertain. (3) There is another class of difficulties, which may be ascribed to preconceived notions of commentators, who imagine that Protagoras the Sophist ought always to be in the wrong, and his adversary Socrates in the right; or that in this or that passage — e. g. in the explanation of good as pleasure —

Plato is inconsistent with himself; or that the Dialogue fails in unity, and has not a proper beginning, middle, and ending. They seem to forget that Plato is a dramatic writer who throws his thoughts into both sides of the argument, and certainly does not aim at any unity which is inconsistent with freedom, and with a natural or even wild manner of treating his subject; also that his mode of revealing the truth is by lights and shadows, and far-off and opposing points of view, and not by dogmatic statements or definite results.

The real difficulties arise out of the extreme subtlety of the work, which, as Socrates says of the poem of Simonides, is a most perfect piece of art. There are dramatic contrasts and interests, threads of philosophy broken and resumed, satirical reflections on mankind, veils thrown over truths which are lightly suggested, and all woven together in a single design, and moving towards one end.

In the introductory scene Plato raises the expectation that a 'great personage' is about to appear on the stage; perhaps with a further view of showing that he is destined to be overthrown by a greater still, who makes no pretensions. Before introducing Hippocrates to him, Socrates thinks proper to warn the youth against the dangers of 'influence,' of which the invidious nature is recognized by Protagoras himself. Hippocrates readily adopts the suggestion of Socrates that he shall learn of Protagoras only the accomplishments which befit an Athenian gentleman, and let alone his 'sophistry.' There is nothing however in the introduction which leads to the inference that Plato intended to blacken the character of the Sophists; he only makes a little merry at their expense.

The 'great personage' is somewhat ostentatious, but frank and honest. He is introduced on a stage which is worthy of him—at the house of the rich Callias, in which are congregated the noblest and wisest of the Athenians. He considers openness to be the best policy, and particularly mentions his own liberal mode of dealing with his pupils, as if in answer to the accusation often brought against the Sophists that they received pay. He is remarkable for the good temper which he exhibits throughout the discussion under the trying and often sophistical cross-examination of Socrates. Although once or twice ruffled, and reluctant to continue the

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discussion, he parts company on perfectly good terms, and appears to be, as he says of himself, the 'least jealous of mankind.'

Nor is there anything in the sentiments of Protagoras which impairs this pleasing impression of the grave and weighty old man. His real defect is that he is inferior to Socrates in dialectics. The opposition between him and Socrates is not the opposition of good and bad, true and false, but of the old art of rhetoric and the new science of interrogation and argument; also of the irony of Socrates and the self-assertion of the Sophists. There is quite as much truth on the side of Protagoras as of Socrates; but the truth of Protagoras is based on common sense and common maxims of morality, while that of Socrates is paradoxical or transcendental, and though full of meaning and insight, hardly intelligible to the rest of mankind. Here as elsewhere is the usual contrast between the Sophists representing average public opinion and Socrates seeking for increased clearness and unity of ideas. But to a great extent Protagoras has the best of the argument and represents the better mind of man.

For example: (1) one of the noblest statements to be found in antiquity about the preventive nature of punishment is put into his mouth; (2) he is clearly right also in maintaining that virtue can be taught (which Socrates himself, at the end of the Dialogue, is disposed to concede); and also (3) in his explanation of the phenomenon that good fathers have bad sons; (4) he is right also in observing that the virtues are not like the arts, gifts or attainments of special individuals, but the common property of all: this, which in all ages has been the strength and weakness of ethics and politics, is deeply seated in human nature; (5) there is a sort of half-truth in the notion that all civilized men are teachers of virtue; and more than a half-truth (6) in ascribing to man, who in his outward conditions is more helpless than the other animals, the power of self-improvement; (7) the religious allegory should be noticed, in which the arts are said to be given by Prometheus (who stole them), whereas justice and reverence and the political virtues could only be imparted by Zeus; (8) in the latter part of the Dialogue, when Socrates is arguing that 'pleasure is the only good,' Protagoras deems it more in accordance with his character to maintain that 'some pleasures only are good;' and admits that

'he, above all other men, is bound to say "that wisdom and knowledge are the highest of human things."'

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There is no reason to suppose that in all this Plato is depicting an imaginary Protagoras; he seems to be showing us the teaching of the Sophists under the milder aspect under which he once regarded them. Nor is there any reason to doubt that Socrates is equally an historical character, paradoxical, ironical, tiresome, but seeking for the unity of virtue and knowledge as for a precious treasure; willing to rest this even on a calculation of pleasure, and irresistible here, as everywhere in Plato, in his intellectual superiority.

The aim of Socrates, and of the Dialogue, is to show the unity of virtue. In the determination of this question the identity of virtue and knowledge is found to be involved. But if virtue and knowledge are one, then virtue can be taught; the end of the Dialogue returns to the beginning. Had Protagoras been allowed by Plato to make the Aristotelian distinction, and say that virtue is not knowledge, but is accompanied with knowledge; or to point out with Aristotle that the same quality may have more than one opposite; or with Plato himself in the Phaedo to deny that good is a mere exchange of a greater pleasure for a less — the unity of virtue and the identity of virtue and knowledge would have required to be proved by other arguments.

The victory of Socrates over Protagoras is in every way complete when their minds are fairly brought together. Protagoras falls before him after two or three blows. Socrates partially gains his object in the first part of the Dialogue, and completely in the second. Nor does he appear at any disadvantage when subjected to 'the question' by Protagoras. He succeeds in making his two 'friends,' Prodicus and Hippias, ludicrous by the way; he also makes a long speech in defence of the poem of Simonides, after the manner of the Sophists, showing, as Alcibiades says, that he is only pretending to have a bad memory, and that he and not Protagoras is really a master in the two styles of speaking; and that he can undertake, not one side of the argument only, but both, when Protagoras begins to break down. Against the authority of the poets with whom Protagoras has ingeniously identified himself at the commencement of the Dialogue, Socrates sets up the proverbial philosophers and those masters of brevity the Lacedae-

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monians. The poets, the Laconizers, and Protagoras are satirized at the same time.

Not having the whole of the poem of Simonides before us, it is impossible for us to answer certainly the question of Protagoras, how the two passages are to be reconciled. We can only follow the indications given by Plato himself. But it seems likely that the reconcilement offered by Socrates is a caricature of the methods of interpretation which were practised by the Sophists — for the following reasons: (1) The transparent irony of the previous interpretations given by Socrates. (2) The ludicrous opening of the speech in which the Lacedaemonians are described as the true philosophers, and Laconic brevity as the true form of philosophy, evidently with an allusion to Protagoras' long speeches. (3) The manifest futility and absurdity of the explanation of *ἐμῶν ἐπαίνημι ἀλαθέως*, which is hardly consistent with the rational interpretation of the rest of the poem. The opposition of *εἶναι* and *γενέσθαι* seems also intended to express the rival doctrines of Socrates and Protagoras, and is a facetious commentary on their differences. (4) The general treatment in Plato both of the Poets and the Sophists, who are their interpreters, and whom he delights to identify with them. (5) The depreciating spirit in which Socrates speaks of the introduction of the poets as a substitute for original conversation, which is intended to contrast with Protagoras' exaltation of the study of them — this again is hardly consistent with the serious defence of Simonides. (6) The marked approval of Hippias, who is supposed at once to catch the familiar sound, just as in the previous conversation Prodicus is represented as ready to accept any distinctions of language however absurd. At the same time Hippias is desirous of substituting a new interpretation of his own; as if the words might really be made to mean anything, and were only to be regarded as affording a field for the ingenuity of the interpreter.

This curious passage is, therefore, to be regarded as Plato's satire on the tedious and hypercritical arts of interpretation which prevailed in his own day, and may be compared with his condemnation of the same arts when applied to mythology in the Phaedrus, and with his other parodies, e. g. with the two first speeches in the Phaedrus and with the Menexenus. Several lesser touches of satire may be observed, such as the claim of philosophy advanced

for the Lacedaemonians, which is a parody of the claims advanced for the Poets by Protagoras; the mistake of the Laconizing set in supposing that the Lacedaemonians are a great nation because they bruise their ears; the far-fetched notion, which is 'really too bad,' that Simonides uses the Lesbian (?) word, *ἐπαίνημι*, because he is addressing a Lesbian. The whole may also be considered as a satire on those who spin pompous theories out of nothing. As in the arguments of the Euthydemus and of the Cratylus, the veil of irony is never withdrawn; and we are left in doubt at last how far in this interpretation of Simonides Socrates is 'fooling,' how far he is in earnest.

All the interests and contrasts of character in a great dramatic work like the Protagoras are not easily exhausted. The impressiveness of the scene should not be lost upon us, or the gradual substitution of Socrates in the second part for Protagoras in the first. The characters to whom we are introduced at the beginning of the Dialogue all play a part more or less conspicuous towards the end. There is Alcibiades, who is compelled by the necessity of his nature to be a partisan, lending effectual aid to Socrates; there is Critias assuming the tone of impartiality; Callias, here as always inclining to the Sophists, but eager for any intellectual repast; Prodicus, who finds an opportunity for displaying his distinctions of language, which are valueless and pedantic, because they are not based on dialectic; Hippias, who has previously exhibited his superficial knowledge of natural philosophy, to which, as in both the Dialogues called by his name, he now adds the profession of an interpreter of the Poets. The two latter personages have been already damaged by the mock heroic description of them in the introduction. It may be remarked that Protagoras is consistently presented to us throughout as the teacher of moral and political virtue; there is no allusion to the theories of sensation which are attributed to him in the Theaetetus and elsewhere, or to his denial of the existence of the gods in a well-known fragment ascribed to him; he is the religious rather than the irreligious teacher in this Dialogue. Also it may be observed that Socrates shows him as much respect as is consistent with his own ironical character; he admits that the dialectic which has overthrown Protagoras has carried himself round to a conclusion opposed to his first thesis. The force

Protagoras. INTRODUCTION.

of argument, therefore, and not Socrates or Protagoras, has won the day.

But is Socrates serious in maintaining (1) that virtue cannot be taught; (2) that the virtues are one; (3) that virtue is the knowledge of pleasures and pains present and future? These propositions to us have an appearance of paradox — they are really moments or aspects of the truth by the help of which we pass from the old conventional morality to a higher conception of virtue and knowledge. That virtue cannot be taught is a paradox of the same sort as the profession of Socrates that he knew nothing. Plato means to say that virtue is not brought to a man, but must be drawn out of him; and cannot be taught by rhetorical discourses or citations from the poets. The second question, whether the virtues are one or many, though at first sight distinct, is really a part of the same subject; for if the virtues are to be taught, they must be reducible to a common principle; and this common principle is found to be knowledge. Here, as Aristotle remarks, Socrates and Plato outstep the truth — they make a part of virtue into the whole. Further, the nature of this knowledge, which is assumed to be a knowledge of pleasures and pains, appears to us too superficial and at variance with the spirit of Plato himself. Yet in this, Plato is only following the historical Socrates as he is depicted to us in Xenophon's Memorabilia. Like Socrates, he finds on the surface of human life one common bond by which the virtues are united, — their tendency to produce happiness — though such a principle is afterwards repudiated by him.

It remains to be considered in what relation the Protagoras stands to the other Dialogues of Plato. That it is one of the earlier or purely Socratic works — perhaps the last, as it is certainly the greatest of them — is indicated by the absence of any allusion to the doctrine of reminiscence; and also by the different attitude assumed towards the teaching and persons of the Sophists in some of the later Dialogues. The Charmides, Laches, Lysis, all touch on the question of the relation of knowledge to virtue, and may be regarded, if not as preliminary studies or sketches of the more important work, at any rate as closely connected with it. The Io and the lesser Hippias contain discussions of the Poets, which offer a parallel to the ironical criticism of Simonides, and are conceived in a similar spirit. The affinity of the Protagoras to

the Meno is more doubtful. For there, although the same question is discussed, 'whether virtue can be taught,' and the relation of Meno to the Sophists is much the same as that of Hippocrates, the answer to the question is supplied out of the doctrine of ideas; the real Socrates is already passing into the Platonic one. At a later stage of the Platonic philosophy we shall find that both the paradox and the solution of it appear to have been retracted. The Phaedo, the Gorgias, and the Philebus offer further corrections of the teaching of the Protagoras; in all of them the doctrine that virtue is pleasure, or that pleasure is the chief or only good, is distinctly renounced.

Thus after many preparations and oppositions, both of the characters of men and aspects of the truth, especially of the popular and philosophical aspect; and after many interruptions and detentions by the way, which, as Theodorus says in the Theaetetus, are quite as agreeable as the argument, we arrive at the great Socratic thesis that virtue is knowledge. This is an aspect of the truth which was lost almost as soon as it was found; and yet has to be recovered by every one for himself who would pass the limits of proverbial and popular philosophy. The moral and intellectual are always dividing, yet they must be reunited, and in the highest conception of them are inseparable. The thesis of Socrates is not merely a hasty assumption, but may be also deemed an anticipation of some 'metaphysic of the future,' in which the divided elements of human nature are reconciled.

PROTAGORAS.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES, *who is the narrator of the Dialogue to his Companion.*
HIPPOCRATES.
ALCIBIADES.
CRITIAS.
PROTAGORAS, HIPPIAS, PRODICUS, } *Sophists.*
CALLIAS, *a wealthy Athenian.*

SCENE:—The House of Callias.

Steph. 309 *Com.* WHERE do you come from, Socrates? And yet I need hardly ask the question, for I know that you have been in chase of the fair Alcibiades. I saw him the day before yesterday; and he had got a beard like a man,—and he is a man, as I may tell you in your ear. But I thought that he was still very charming.

Protagoras. COMPANION, SOCRATES. The fair Alcibiades.

Soc. What of his beard? Are you not of Homer's opinion, who says[1]

'Youth is most charming when the beard first appears'?

And that is now the charm of Alcibiades.

Com. Well, and how do matters proceed? Have you been visiting him, and was he gracious to you?

Soc. Yes, I thought that he was very gracious; and especially to-day, for I have just come from him, and he has been helping me in an argument. But shall I tell you a strange thing? I paid no attention to him, and several times I quite forgot that he was present.

Com. What is the meaning of this? Has anything happened between you and him? For surely you cannot have discovered a fairer love than he is; certainly not in this city of Athens.

Soc. Yes, much fairer.

But there is a fairer still.

Com. What do you mean — a citizen or a foreigner?

[1] Il. xxiv. 348.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, COMPANION, HIPPOCRATES.

Soc. A foreigner.

Com. Of what country?

Soc. Of Abdera.

Com. And is this stranger really in your opinion a fairer love than the son of Cleinias?

The fairer is the wiser, and the wisest of all men is Protagoras.

Soc. And is not the wiser always the fairer, sweet friend?

Com. But have you really met, Socrates, with some wise one?

Soc. Say rather, with the wisest of all living men, if you are willing to accord that title to Protagoras.

Com. What! Is Protagoras in Athens?

Soc. Yes; he has been here two days.

Com. And do you just come from an interview with him?

Soc. Yes; and I have heard and said many things. 310

Com. Then, if you have no engagement, suppose that you sit down and tell me what passed, and my attendant here shall give up his place to you.

Soc. To be sure; and I shall be grateful to you for listening.

Com. Thank you, too, for telling us.

Soc. That is thank you twice over. Listen then:—

He is actually in Athens, and Hippocrates has come to bring the good news to Socrates.

Last night, or rather very early this morning, Hippocrates, the son of Apollodorus and the brother of Phason, gave a tremendous thump with his staff at my door; some one opened to him, and he came rushing in and bawled out: Socrates, are you awake or asleep?

I knew his voice, and said: Hippocrates, is that you? and do you bring any news?

Good news, he said; nothing but good.

Delightful, I said; but what is the news? and why have you come hither at this unearthly hour?

He drew nearer to me and said: Protagoras is come.

Yes, I replied; he came two days ago: have you only just heard of his arrival?

Yes, by the gods, he said; but not until yesterday evening.

At the same time he felt for the truckle-bed, and sat down at my feet, and then he said: Yesterday quite late in the evening, on my return from Oenoe whither I had gone in pursuit of my runaway slave Satyrus, as I meant to have told you, if some other matter had not come in the way;—on my

return, when we had done supper and were about to retire to rest, my brother said to me: Protagoras is come. I was going to you at once, and then I thought that the night was far spent. But the moment sleep left me after my fatigue, I got up and came hither direct.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, HIPPOCRATES.

I, who knew the very courageous madness of the man, said: What is the matter? Has Protagoras robbed you of anything?

He replied, laughing: Yes, indeed he has, Socrates, of the wisdom which he keeps from me.

But, surely, I said, if you give him money, and make friends with him, he will make you as wise as he is himself.

Would to heaven, he replied, that this were the case! He might take all that I have, and all that my friends have, if he pleased. But that is why I have come to you now, in order that you may speak to him on my behalf; for I am young, and also I have never seen nor heard him; (when he visited
311 Athens before I was but a child;) and all men praise him, Socrates; he is reputed to be the most accomplished of speakers. There is no reason why we should not go to him at once, and then we shall find him at home. He lodges, as I hear, with Callias the son of Hipponicus: let us start.

He wants Socrates to introduce him at once.

I replied: Not yet, my good friend; the hour is too early. But let us rise and take a turn in the court and wait about there until day-break; when the day breaks, then we will go. For Protagoras is generally at home, and we shall be sure to find him; never fear.

But the day has not yet risen, so the two take a turn in the court.

Upon this we got up and walked about in the court, and I thought that I would make trial of the strength of his resolution. So I examined him and put questions to him. Tell me, Hippocrates, I said, as you are going to Protagoras, and will be paying your money to him, what is he to whom you are going? and what will he make of you? If, for example, you had thought of going to Hippocrates of Cos, the Asclepiad, and were about to give him your money, and some one had said to you: You are paying money to your namesake Hippocrates, O Hippocrates; tell me, what is he that you give him money? how would you have answered?

Socrates seizes the opportunity of questioning Hippocrates—Why is he going to Protagoras? What will he make of him?

I should say, he replied, that I gave money to him as being a physician.

Protagoras. And what will he make of you?

SOCRATES, HIPPOCRATES. A physician, he said.

And if you were resolved to go to Polycleitus the Argive, or Pheidias the Athenian, and were intending to give them money, and some one had asked you: What are Polycleitus and Pheidias? and why do you give them this money?—how would you have answered?

I should have answered, that they were statuaries.

And what will they make of you?

A statuary, of course.

Well now, I said, you and I are going to Protagoras, and we are ready to pay him money on your behalf. If our own means are sufficient, and we can gain him with these, we shall be only too glad; but if not, then we are to spend the money of your friends as well. Now suppose, that while we are thus enthusiastically pursuing our object some one were to say to us: Tell me, Socrates, and you Hippocrates, what is Protagoras, and why are you going to pay him money,—how should we answer? I know that Pheidias is a sculptor, and that Homer is a poet; but what special name is given to Protagoras? how is he designated?

They call him a Sophist, Socrates, he replied.

The breaking dawn reveals a blush on the face of Hippocrates as he replies, 'A Sophist.'

Then we are going to pay our money to him in the character of a Sophist?

Certainly.

But suppose a person were to ask this further question: And how about yourself? What will Protagoras make of 312
you, if you go to see him?

He answered, with a blush upon his face (for the day was just beginning to dawn, so that I could see him): Unless this differs in some way from the former instances, I suppose that he will make a Sophist of me.

By the gods, I said, and are you not ashamed at having to appear before the Hellenes in the character of a Sophist?

Indeed, Socrates, to confess the truth, I am.

But you should not assume, Hippocrates, that the instruction of Protagoras is of this nature: may you not learn of him in the same way that you learned the arts of the grammarian, or musician, or trainer, not with the view of making any of them a profession, but only as a part of education, and

because a private gentleman and freeman ought to know them?

Just so, he said; and that, in my opinion, is a far truer account of the teaching of Protagoras.

I said: I wonder whether you know what you are doing?

Do you know what you are doing, or what is the nature of the Sophist?

And what am I doing?

You are going to commit your soul to the care of a man whom you call a Sophist. And yet I hardly think that you know what a Sophist is; and if not, then you do not even know to whom you are committing your soul and whether the thing to which you commit yourself be good or evil.

I certainly think that I do know, he replied.

Then tell me, what do you imagine that he is?

I take him to be one who knows wise things, he replied, as his name implies.

And might you not, I said, affirm this of the painter and of the carpenter also: Do not they, too, know wise things? But suppose a person were to ask us: In what are the painters wise? We should answer: In what relates to the making of likenesses, and similarly of other things. And if he were further to ask: What is the wisdom of the Sophist, and what is the manufacture over which he presides?—how should we answer him?

He is one who makes men talk eloquently about what he himself knows.

How should we answer him, Socrates? What other answer could there be but that he presides over the art which makes men eloquent?

Yes, I replied, that is very likely true, but not enough; for in the answer a further question is involved: Of what does the Sophist make a man talk eloquently? The player on the lyre may be supposed to make a man talk eloquently about that which he makes him understand, that is about playing the lyre. Is not that true?

Yes.

Then about what does the Sophist make him eloquent? Must not he make him eloquent in that which he understands?

Yes, that may be assumed.

And what is that which the Sophist knows and makes his disciple know?

Indeed, he said, I cannot tell.

Protagoras. Then I proceeded to say: Well, but are you aware of the 313
SOCRATES, danger which you are incurring? If you were going to
HIPPOCRATES. commit your body to some one, who might do good or harm
But if you do not know what that is, you cannot safely trust yourself to him. to it, would you not carefully consider and ask the opinion of your friends and kindred, and deliberate many days as to whether you should give him the care of your body? But when the soul is in question, which you hold to be of far more value than the body, and upon the good or evil of which depends the well-being of your all,—about this you never consulted either with your father or with your brother or with any one of us who are your companions. But no sooner does this foreigner appear, than you instantly commit your soul to his keeping. In the evening, as you say, you hear of him, and in the morning you go to him, never deliberating or taking the opinion of any one as to whether you ought to intrust yourself to him or not;—you have quite made up your mind that you will at all hazards be a pupil of Protagoras, and are prepared to expend all the property of yourself and of your friends in carrying out at any price this determination, although, as you admit, you do not know him, and have never spoken with him: and you call him a Sophist, but are manifestly ignorant of what a Sophist is; and yet you are going to commit yourself to his keeping.

When he heard me say this, he replied: So it would seem, if what you say is true.

The Sophist is one who sells the food of the soul, I proceeded: Is not a Sophist, Hippocrates, one who deals wholesale or retail in the food of the soul? To me that appears to be his nature.

And what, Socrates, is the food of the soul?

Surely, I said, knowledge is the food of the soul; and we must take care, my friend, that the Sophist does not deceive us when he praises what he sells, like the dealers wholesale or retail who sell the food of the body; for they praise indiscriminately all their goods, without knowing what are really beneficial or hurtful: neither do their customers know, with the exception of any trainer or physician who may happen to buy of them. In like manner those who carry about the wares of knowledge, and make the round of the cities, and sell or retail them to any customer who is in want of them, praise them all alike; though I should not wonder,

O my friend, if many of them were really ignorant of their effect upon the soul; and their customers equally ignorant, unless he who buys of them happens to be a physician of the soul. If, therefore, you have understanding of what is good and evil, you may safely buy knowledge of Protagoras or of
314 any one; but if not, then, O my friend, pause, and do not hazard your dearest interests at a game of chance. For there is far greater peril in buying knowledge than in buying meat and drink: the one you purchase of the wholesale or retail dealer, and carry them away in other vessels, and before you receive them into the body as food, you may deposit them at home and call in any experienced friend who knows what is good to be eaten or drunken, and what not, and how much, and when; and then the danger of purchasing them is not so great. But you cannot buy the wares of knowledge and carry them away in another vessel; when you have paid for them you must receive them into the soul and go your way, either greatly harmed or greatly benefited; and therefore we should deliberate and take counsel with our elders; for you and I are still young—too young to determine such a matter. And now let us go, as we were intending, and hear Protagoras; and when we have heard what he has to say, we may take counsel of others; for not only is Protagoras at the house of Callias, but there is Hippias of Elis, and, if I am not mistaken, Prodicus of Ceos, and several other wise men.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, THE DOOR-KEEPER.

which may be wholesome or poisonous.

To this we agreed, and proceeded on our way until we reached the vestibule of the house; and there we stopped in order to conclude a discussion which had arisen between us as we were going along; and we stood talking in the vestibule until we had finished and come to an understanding. And I think that the door-keeper, who was a eunuch, and who was probably annoyed at the great inroad of the Sophists, must have heard us talking. At any rate, when we knocked at the door, and he opened and saw us, he grumbled: They are Sophists—he is not at home; and instantly gave the door a hearty bang with both his hands. Again we knocked, and he answered without opening: Did you not hear me say that he is not at home, fellows? But, my friend, I said, you need not be alarmed; for we are not

The porter of the house shows that he is not a friend of the Sophists.

Socrates pacifies him.

Protagoras. Sophists, and we are not come to see Callias, but we want to see Protagoras; and I must request you to announce us. At last, after a good deal of difficulty, the man was persuaded to open the door.

SOCRATES.

When we entered, we found Protagoras taking a walk in the cloister; and next to him, on one side, were walking Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and Paralus, the son of Pericles, who, by the mother's side, is his half-brother, and Charmides, the son of Glaucon. On the other side of him 315
were Xanthippus, the other son of Pericles, Philippides, the son of Philomelus; also Antimoerus of Mende, who of all the disciples of Protagoras is the most famous, and intends to make sophistry his profession. A train of listeners followed him; the greater part of them appeared to be foreigners, whom Protagoras had brought with him out of the various cities visited by him in his journeys, he, like Orpheus, attracting them by his voice, and they following[1]. I should mention also that there were some Athenians in the company. Nothing delighted me more than the precision of their movements: they took such care never to come in his way at all; but when he and those who were with him turned back, then the band of listeners parted regularly on either side; he was always in front, and they wheeled round and took their places behind him in perfect order.

A well-trained band of listeners accompany Protagoras while walking in the cloister.

After him, as Homer says[2], 'I lifted up my eyes and saw' Hippias the Elean sitting in the opposite cloister on a chair of state, and around him were seated on benches Eryximachus, the son of Acumenus, and Phaedrus the Myrrhinusian, and Andron the son of Androtion, and there were strangers whom he had brought with him from his native city of Elis, and some others: they were putting to Hippias certain physical and astronomical questions, and he, *ex cathedrâ*, was determining their several questions to them, and discoursing of them.

Hippias is seated in the opposite cloister.

Also, 'my eyes beheld Tantalus[3];' for Prodicus the Cean was at Athens: he had been lodged in a room which, in the days of Hipponicus, was a storehouse; but, as the house was full, Callias had cleared this out and made the room into

Prodicus is in the storehouse, but still in bed.

[1] Cp. Rep. x. 600 D. [2] Od. xi. 601 foll. [3] Od. xi. 582.

Protagoras.

Socrates, Protagoras.

a guest chamber. Now Prodicus was still in bed, wrapped up in sheepskins and bedclothes, of which there seemed to be a great heap; and there was sitting by him on the couches near, Pausanias of the deme of Cerameis, and with Pausanias was a youth quite young, who is certainly remarkable for his good looks, and, if I am not mistaken, is also of a fair and gentle nature. I thought that I heard him called Agathon, and my suspicion is that he is the beloved of Pausanias. There was this youth, and also there were the two Adeimantuses, one the son of Cepis, and the other of Leucolophides, and some others. I was very anxious to hear what Prodicus was saying, for he seems to me to be an all-wise and inspired
316 man; but I was not able to get into the inner circle, and his fine deep voice made an echo in the room which rendered his words indistinct.

Pausanias the lover of Agathon.

No sooner had we entered than there followed us Alcibiades the beautiful, as you say, and I believe you; and also Critias the son of Callaeschrus.

Alcibiades makes his appearance.

On entering we stopped a little, in order to look about us, and then walked up to Protagoras, and I said: Protagoras, my friend Hippocrates and I have come to see you.

Do you wish, he said, to speak with me alone, or in the presence of the company?

Whichever you please, I said; you shall determine when you have heard the purpose of our visit.

And what is your purpose? he said.

I must explain, I said, that my friend Hippocrates is a native Athenian; he is the son of Apollodorus, and of a great and prosperous house, and he is himself in natural ability quite a match for anybody of his own age. I believe that he aspires to political eminence; and this he thinks that conversation with you is most likely to procure for him. And now you can determine whether you would wish to speak to him of your teaching alone or in the presence of the company.

Hippocrates and Socrates approach Protagoras, who enlarges upon the antiquity of his art and upon the jealousies and suspicions which are entertained of him.

Thank you, Socrates, for your consideration of me. For certainly a stranger finding his way into great cities, and persuading the flower of the youth in them to leave the company of their kinsmen or any other acquaintances, old or young, and live with him, under the idea that they will be

Protagoras. improved by his conversation, ought to be very cautious; great jealousies are aroused by his proceedings, and he is the subject of many enmities and conspiracies. Now the art of the Sophist is, as I believe, of great antiquity; but in ancient times those who practised it, fearing this odium, veiled and disguised themselves under various names, some under that of poets, as Homer, Hesiod, and Simonides, some, of hierophants and prophets, as Orpheus and Musaeus, and some, as I observe, even under the name of gymnastic-masters, like Iccus of Tarentum, or the more recently celebrated Herodicus, now of Selymbria and formerly of Megara, who is a first-rate Sophist. Your own Agathocles pretended to be a musician, but was really an eminent Sophist; also Pythocleides the Cean; and there were many others; and all of them, as I was saying, adopted these arts as veils or disguises because they were afraid of the odium which they would incur. But that is not my way, for I do not believe that 317
they effected their purpose, which was to deceive the government, who were not blinded by them; and as to the people, they have no understanding, and only repeat what their rulers are pleased to tell them. Now to run away, and to be caught in running away, is the very height of folly, and also greatly increases the exasperation of mankind; for they regard him who runs away as a rogue, in addition to any other objections which they have to him; and therefore I take an entirely opposite course, and acknowledge myself to be a Sophist and instructor of mankind; such an open acknowledgment appears to me to be a better sort of caution than concealment. Nor do I neglect other precautions, and therefore I hope, as I may say, by the favour of heaven that no harm will come of the acknowledgment that I am a Sophist. And I have been now many years in the profession—for all my years when added up are many: there is no one here present of whom I might not be the father. Wherefore I should much prefer conversing with you, if you want to speak with me, in the presence of the company.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

The Sophists of old concealed themselves under the names of poets and musicians, but Protagoras thinks that openness is the best policy.

As I suspected that he would like to have a little display and glorification in the presence of Prodicus and Hippias, and would gladly show us to them in the light of his

admirers, I said: But why should we not summon Prodicus and Hippias and their friends to hear us?

Protagoras. SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS, CALLIAS.

Very good, he said.

They agree to hold a council.

Suppose, said Callias, that we hold a council in which you may sit and discuss.—This was agreed upon, and great delight was felt at the prospect of hearing wise men talk; we ourselves took the chairs and benches, and arranged them by Hippias, where the other benches had been already placed. Meanwhile Callias and Alcibiades got Prodicus out of bed and brought in him and his companions.

When we were all seated, Protagoras said: Now that the company are assembled, Socrates, tell me about the young
318 man of whom you were just now speaking.

The question is asked, What will happen to Hippocrates if he becomes the disciple of Protagoras?

I replied: I will begin again at the same point, Protagoras, and tell you once more the purport of my visit: this is my friend Hippocrates, who is desirous of making your acquaintance; he would like to know what will happen to him if he associates with you. I have no more to say.

Answer: He will daily grow wiser and better,

Protagoras answered: Young man, if you associate with me, on the very first day you will return home a better man than you came, and better on the second day than on the first, and better every day than you were on the day before.

When I heard this, I said: Protagoras, I do not at all wonder at hearing you say this; even at your age, and with all your wisdom, if any one were to teach you what you did not know before, you would become better no doubt: but please to answer in a different way—I will explain how by an example. Let me suppose that Hippocrates, instead of desiring your acquaintance, wished to become acquainted with the young man Zeuxippus of Heraclea, who has lately been in Athens, and he had come to him as he has come to you, and had heard him say, as he has heard you say, that every day he would grow and become better if he associated with him: and then suppose that he were to ask him, 'In what shall I become better, and in what shall I grow?'—Zeuxippus would answer, 'In painting.' And suppose that he went to Orthagoras the Theban, and heard him say the same thing, and asked him, 'In what shall I become better day by day?' he would reply, 'In flute-playing.' Now I want you to make the same sort of answer to this young man and

Protagoras. to me, who am asking questions on his behalf. When you say that on the first day on which he associates with you he

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. will return home a better man, and on every day will grow in

But in what? like manner,—in what, Protagoras, will he be better? and about what?

When Protagoras heard me say this, he replied: You ask questions fairly, and I like to answer a question which is fairly put. If Hippocrates comes to me he will not experience the sort of drudgery with which other Sophists are in the habit of insulting their pupils; who, when they have just escaped from the arts, are taken and driven back into them by these teachers, and made to learn calculation, and astronomy, and geometry, and music (he gave a look at Hippias as he said this); but if he comes to me, he will learn that which he comes to learn. And this is prudence in affairs private as well as public; he will learn to order his own house in the best manner, and he will be able to speak and act for the best in the affairs of the state.

in the knowledge of affairs private as well as public.

Do I understand you, I said; and is your meaning that 319
you teach the art of politics, and that you promise to make men good citizens?

That, Socrates, is exactly the profession which I make.

Then, I said, you do indeed possess a noble art, if there is no mistake about this; for I will freely confess to you, Protagoras, that I have a doubt whether the art of politics is capable of being taught, and yet I know not how to disbelieve your assertion. And I ought to tell you why I am of opinion that this art cannot be taught or communicated by man to man. I say that the Athenians are an understanding people, and such indeed they are esteemed to be by the other Hellenes. Now I observe that when we are met together in the assembly, and the matter in hand relates to building, the builders are summoned as advisers; when the question is one of ship-building, then the ship-wrights; and the like of other arts which they think capable of being taught and learned. And if some person offers to give them advice who is not supposed by them to have any skill in the art, even though he be good-looking, and rich, and noble, they will not listen to him, but laugh and hoot at him, until either he is clamoured down and retires of himself; or if he persist, he is dragged

But such knowledge cannot be taught or communicated by one man to another.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

away or put out by the constables at the command of the prytanes. This is their way of behaving about professors of the arts. But when the question is an affair of state, then everybody is free to have a say—carpenter, tinker, cobbler, sailor, passenger; rich and poor, high and low—any one who likes gets up, and no one reproaches him, as in the former case, with not having learned, and having no teacher, and yet giving advice; evidently because they are under the impression that this sort of knowledge cannot be taught. And not only is this true of the state, but of individuals; the best and wisest of our citizens are unable to impart their
320 political wisdom to others: as for example, Pericles, the father of these young men, who gave them excellent instruction in all that could be learned from masters, in his own department of politics neither taught them, nor gave them teachers; but they were allowed to wander at their own free will in a sort of hope that they would light upon virtue of their own accord. Or take another example: there was Cleinias the younger brother of our friend Alcibiades, of whom this very same Pericles was the guardian; and he being in fact under the apprehension that Cleinias would be corrupted by Alcibiades, took him away, and placed him in the house of Ariphron to be educated; but before six months had elapsed, Ariphron sent him back, not knowing what to do with him. And I could mention numberless other instances of persons who were good themselves, and never yet made any one else good, whether friend or stranger. Now I, Protagoras, having these examples before me, am inclined to think that virtue cannot be taught. But then again, when I listen to your words, I waver; and am disposed to think that there must be something in what you say, because I know that you have great experience, and learning, and invention. And I wish that you would, if possible, show me a little more clearly that virtue can be taught. Will you be so good?

Pericles could not teach his own sons politics, nor his ward Cleinias virtue.

Will Protagoras be so good as to prove that virtue can be taught?

That I will, Socrates, and gladly. But what would you like? Shall I, as an elder, speak to you as younger men in an apologue or myth, or shall I argue out the question?

Protagoras promises to do so in an apologue.

To this several of the company answered that he should choose for himself.

Protagoras.

PROTAGORAS. Well, then, he said, I think that the myth will be more interesting.

The creation of the brute animals, who were equipped with the qualities necessary for their preservation, while men remained naked and defenceless.

Once upon a time there were gods only, and no mortal creatures. But when the time came that these also should be created, the gods fashioned them out of earth and fire and various mixtures of both elements in the interior of the earth; and when they were about to bring them into the light of day, they ordered Prometheus and Epimetheus to equip them, and to distribute to them severally their proper qualities. Epimetheus said to Prometheus: 'Let me distribute, and do you inspect.' This was agreed, and Epimetheus made the distribution. There were some to whom he gave strength without swiftness, while he equipped the weaker with swiftness; some he armed, and others he left unarmed; and devised for the latter some other means of preservation, making some large, and having their size as a protection, and others small, whose nature was to fly in the air or burrow in the ground; this was to be their way of escape. Thus did 321
he compensate them with the view of preventing any race from becoming extinct. And when he had provided against their destruction by one another, he contrived also a means of protecting them against the seasons of heaven; clothing them with close hair and thick skins sufficient to defend them against the winter cold and able to resist the summer heat, so that they might have a natural bed of their own when they wanted to rest; also he furnished them with hoofs and hair and hard and callous skins under their feet. Then he gave them varieties of food,—herb of the soil to some, to others fruits of trees, and to others roots, and to some again he gave other animals as food. And some he made to have few young ones, while those who were their prey were very prolific; and in this manner the race was preserved. Thus did Epimetheus, who, not being very wise, forgot that he had distributed among the brute animals all the qualities which he had to give,—and when he came to man, who was still unprovided, he was terribly perplexed. Now while he was in this perplexity, Prometheus came to inspect the distribution, and he found that the other animals were suitably furnished, but that man alone was naked and shoeless, and had neither bed nor arms of defence. The appointed hour

To meet this need of theirs Prometheus stole the arts of Athene and

was approaching when man in his turn was to go forth into the light of day; and Prometheus, not knowing how he could devise his salvation, stole the mechanical arts of Hephaestus and Athene, and fire with them (they could neither have been acquired nor used without fire), and gave them to man. Thus man had the wisdom necessary to the support of life, but political wisdom he had not; for that was in the keeping of Zeus, and the power of Prometheus did not extend to entering into the citadel of heaven, where Zeus dwelt, who moreover had terrible sentinels; but he did enter by stealth into the common workshop of Athene and Hephaestus, in which they used to practise their favourite arts, and carried off Hephaestus' art of working by fire, and also the art of Athene, and gave them to man. And in this way man was supplied with the means of life. But Prometheus is said to have been afterwards prosecuted for theft, owing to the blunder of Epimetheus.

Hephaestus, together with fire.

322 Now man, having a share of the divine attributes, was at first the only one of the animals who had any gods, because he alone was of their kindred; and he would raise altars and images of them. He was not long in inventing articulate speech and names; and he also constructed houses and clothes and shoes and beds, and drew sustenance from the earth. Thus provided, mankind at first lived dispersed, and there were no cities. But the consequence was that they were destroyed by the wild beasts, for they were utterly weak in comparison of them, and their art was only sufficient to provide them with the means of life, and did not enable them to carry on war against the animals: food they had, but not as yet the art of government, of which the art of war is a part. After a while the desire of self-preservation gathered them into cities; but when they were gathered together, having no art of government, they evil intreated one another, and were again in process of dispersion and destruction. Zeus feared that the entire race would be exterminated, and so he sent Hermes to them, bearing reverence and justice to be the ordering principles of cities and the bonds of friendship and conciliation. Hermes asked Zeus how he should impart justice and reverence among men:—Should he distribute them as the arts are distributed;

But men were still destitute of political wisdom, and were in danger of being exterminated by the wild beasts.

So to protect themselves they gathered into cities; but having no sense of right, they began to destroy one another.

Hermes at the desire of Zeus imparted justice and reverence to them.

Protagoras. that is to say, to a favoured few only, one skilled individual having enough of medicine or of any other art for many unskilled ones? 'Shall this be the manner in which I am to distribute justice and reverence among men, or shall I give them to all?' 'To all,' said Zeus; 'I should like them all to have a share; for cities cannot exist, if a few only share in the virtues, as in the arts. And further, make a law by my order, that he who has no part in reverence and justice shall be put to death, for he is a plague of the state.'

PROTAGORAS. These virtues were distributed, not, like the arts, to a few only, but to all.

And this is the reason, Socrates, why the Athenians and mankind in general, when the question relates to carpentering or any other mechanical art, allow but a few to share in their deliberations; and when any one else interferes, then, as you say, they object, if he be not of the favoured few; and this, as I reply, is very natural. But when they meet to deliberate about political virtue, which proceeds only 323
by way of justice and wisdom, they are patient enough of any man who speaks of them, as is also natural, because they think that every man ought to share in this sort of virtue, and that states could not exist if they did not. I have explained to you, Socrates, the reason of this phenomenon.

And certainly all men are expected to profess them,

And that you may not suppose yourself to be deceived in thinking that all men regard every man as having a share of justice or honesty and of every other political virtue, let me give you a further proof, which is this. In other cases, as you are aware, if a man says that he is a good flute-player, or skilful in any other art in which he has no skill, people either laugh at him or are angry with him, and his relations think that he is mad and go and admonish him; but when honesty is in question, or some other political virtue, even if they know that he is dishonest, yet, if the man comes publicly forward and tells the truth about his dishonesty, then, what in the other case was held by them to be good sense, they now deem to be madness. They say that all men ought to profess honesty whether they are honest or not, and that a man is out of his mind who says anything else. Their notion is, that a man must have some degree of honesty; and that if he has none at all he ought not to be in the world.

I have been showing that they are right in admitting every

man as a counsellor about this sort of virtue, since they are of opinion that every man is a partaker of it. And I will now endeavour to show further that they do not conceive this virtue to be given by nature, or to grow spontaneously, but to be a thing which may be taught; and which comes to a man by taking pains. No one would instruct, no one would rebuke, or be angry with those whose calamities they suppose to be due to nature or chance; they do not try to punish or to prevent them from being what they are; they do but pity them. Who is so foolish as to chastise or instruct the ugly, or the diminutive, or the feeble? And why not? Because he knows that good and evil of this kind is the work of nature and of chance; whereas if a man is wanting in the good qualities which are attained by study and exercise and teaching, and has only the contrary evil qualities, other men are angry with him, and punish and reprove him—of
324 which evil qualities one is impiety, another injustice, and they may be described generally as the very opposite of political virtue. In such cases any man will be angry with another, and reprimand him,—clearly because he thinks that by study and learning, the virtue in which the other is deficient may be acquired. If you will think, Socrates, of the nature of punishment, you will see at once that in the opinion of mankind virtue may be acquired; no one punishes the evil-doer under the notion, or for the reason, that he has done wrong,—only the unreasonable fury of a beast acts in that manner. But he who desires to inflict rational punishment does not retaliate for a past wrong which cannot be undone; he has regard to the future, and is desirous that the man who is punished, and he who sees him punished, may be deterred from doing wrong again. He punishes for the sake of prevention, thereby clearly implying that virtue is capable of being taught. This is the notion of all who retaliate upon others either privately or publicly. And the Athenians, too, your own citizens, like other men, punish and take vengeance on all whom they regard as evil doers; and hence, we may infer them to be of the number of those who think that virtue may be acquired and taught. Thus far, Socrates, I have shown you clearly enough, if I am not mistaken, that your countrymen are right in admitting the

Protagoras. PROTAGORAS.

and are punished for the want of them, which is a proof that they can be acquired and taught.

Protagoras. tinker and the cobbler to advise about politics, and also that they deem virtue to be capable of being taught and acquired.

PROTAGORAS. There yet remains one difficulty which has been raised by you about the sons of good men. What is the reason why good men teach their sons the knowledge which is gained from teachers, and make them wise in that, but do nothing towards improving them in the virtues which distinguish themselves? And here, Socrates, I will leave the apologue and resume the argument. Please to consider: Is there or is there not some one quality of which all the citizens must be partakers, if there is to be a city at all? In the answer to this question is contained the only solution of your difficulty; there is no other. For if there be any such quality, and this quality or unity is not the art of the carpenter, or the smith, or the potter, but justice and 325
temperance and holiness and, in a word, manly virtue—if this is the quality of which all men must be partakers, and which is the very condition of their learning or doing anything else, and if he who is wanting in this, whether he be a child only or a grown-up man or woman, must be taught and punished, until by punishment he becomes better, and he who rebels against instruction and punishment is either exiled or condemned to death under the idea that he is incurable—if what I am saying be true, and good men have their sons taught other things and not this, do consider how extraordinary their conduct would appear to be. For we have shown that they think virtue capable of being taught and cultivated both in private and public; and, notwithsanding, they have their sons taught lesser matters, ignorance of which does not involve the punishment of death: but greater things, of which the ignorance may cause death and exile to those who have no training or knowledge of them—aye, and confiscation as well as death, and, in a word, may be the ruin of families—those things, I say, they are supposed not to teach them,—not to take the utmost care that they should learn. Of course, Socrates, they are taught them.

But why do not good men teach their sons virtue?

Education and admonition commence in the first years of childhood, and last to the very end of life. Mother and nurse and father and tutor are vying with one another about the improvement of the child as soon as ever he is able

They do in fact teach them in all stages of their life by

to understand what is being said to him: he cannot say or do anything without their setting forth to him that this is just and that is unjust; this is honourable, that is dishonourable; this is holy, that is unholy; do this and abstain from that. And if he obeys, well and good; if not, he is straightened by threats and blows, like a piece of bent or warped wood. At a later stage they send him to teachers, and enjoin them to see to his manners even more than to his reading and music; and the teachers do as they are desired. And when the boy has learned his letters and is beginning to understand what is written, as before he understood only
326 what was spoken, they put into his hands the works of great poets, which he reads sitting on a bench at school; in these are contained many admonitions, and many tales, and praises, and encomia of ancient famous men, which he is required to learn by heart, in order that he may imitate or emulate them and desire to become like them. Then, again, the teachers of the lyre take similar care that their young disciple is temperate and gets into no mischief; and when they have taught him the use of the lyre, they introduce him to the poems of other excellent poets, who are the lyric poets; and these they set to music, and make their harmonies and rhythms quite familiar to the children's souls, in order that they may learn to be more gentle, and harmonious, and rhythmical, and so more fitted for speech and action; for the life of man in every part has need of harmony and rhythm. Then they send them to the master of gymnastic, in order that their bodies may better minister to the virtuous mind, and that they may not be compelled through bodily weakness to play the coward in war or on any other occasion. This is what is done by those who have the means, and those who have the means are the rich; their children begin to go to school soonest and leave off latest. When they have done with masters, the state again compels them to learn the laws, and live after the pattern which they furnish, and not after their own fancies; and just as in learning to write, the writing-master first draws lines with a style for the use of the young beginner, and gives him the tablet and makes him follow the lines, so the city draws the laws, which were the invention of good lawgivers living in the olden time;

Protagoras.

PROTAGORAS.

the help of tutors, nurses, teachers, and professors of all sorts.

When they grow up the laws become their teacher.

Beyond question, then, virtue can be taught.

Protagoras. PROTAGORAS. these are given to the young man, in order to guide him in his conduct whether he is commanding or obeying; and he who transgresses them is to be corrected, or, in other words, called to account, which is a term used not only in your country, but also in many others, seeing that justice calls men to account. Now when there is all this care about virtue private and public, why, Socrates, do you still wonder and doubt whether virtue can be taught? Cease to wonder, for the opposite would be far more surprising.

But the sons of good men are not always good men, any more than the sons of good artists are always good artists.

But why then do the sons of good fathers often turn out ill? There is nothing very wonderful in this; for, as I have been saying, the existence of a state implies that virtue is not any man's private possession. If so—and nothing 327
can be truer—then I will further ask you to imagine, as an illustration, some other pursuit or branch of knowledge which may be assumed equally to be the condition of the existence of a state. Suppose that there could be no state unless we were all flute-players, as far as each had the capacity, and everybody was freely teaching everybody the art, both in private and public, and reproving the bad player as freely and openly as every man now teaches justice and the laws, not concealing them as he would conceal the other arts, but imparting them—for all of us have a mutual interest in the justice and virtue of one another, and this is the reason why every one is so ready to teach justice and the laws;—suppose, I say, that there were the same readiness and liberality among us in teaching one another flute-playing, do you imagine, Socrates, that the sons of good flute-players would be more likely to be good than the sons of bad ones? I think not. Would not their sons grow up to be distinguished or undistinguished according to their own natural capacities as flute-players, and the son of a good player would often turn out to be a bad one, and the son of a bad player to be a good one, and all flute-players would be good enough in comparison of those who were ignorant and unacquainted with the art of flute-playing? In like manner I would have you consider that he who appears to you to be the worst of those who have been brought up in laws and humanities, would appear to be a just man and a master of justice if he were to be compared with men who

The worst of civilized men are good enough compared with savages.

had no education, or courts of justice, or laws, or any restraints upon them which compelled them to practise virtue—with the savages, for example, whom the poet Pherecrates exhibited on the stage at the last year's Lenaean festival. If you were living among men such as the man-haters in his Chorus, you would be only too glad to meet with Eurybates and Phrynondas, and you would sorrowfully long to revisit the rascality of this part of the world. And you, Socrates, are discontented, and why? Because all men are teachers of virtue, each one according to his ability; and you say Where are the teachers? You might as well
328 ask, Who teaches Greek? For of that too there will not be any teachers found. Or you might ask, Who is to teach the sons of our artisans this same art which they have learned of their fathers? He and his fellow-workmen have taught them to the best of their ability,—but who will carry them further in their arts? And you would certainly have a difficulty, Socrates, in finding a teacher of them; but there would be no difficulty in finding a teacher of those who are wholly ignorant. And this is true of virtue or of anything else; if a man is better able than we are to promote virtue ever so little, we must be content with the result. A teacher of this sort I believe myself to be, and above all other men to have the knowledge which makes a man noble and good; and I give my pupils their money's-worth, and even more, as they themselves confess. And therefore I have introduced the following mode of payment:—When a man has been my pupil, if he likes he pays my price, but there is no compulsion; and if he does not like, he has only to go into a temple and take an oath of the value of the instructions, and he pays no more than he declares to be their value.

Protagoras. PROTAGORAS.

All men are teachers of virtue to a certain extent.

Such is my Apologue, Socrates, and such is the argument by which I endeavour to show that virtue may be taught, and that this is the opinion of the Athenians. And I have also attempted to show that you are not to wonder at good fathers having bad sons, or at good sons having bad fathers, of which the sons of Polycleitus afford an example, who are the companions of our friends here, Paralus and Xanthippus, but are nothing in comparison with their father; and this is true of the sons of many other artists. As yet I ought not to say

Protagoras. the same of Paralus and Xanthippus themselves, for they are young and there is still hope of them.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. Protagoras ended, and in my ear

> 'So charming left his voice, that I the while
> Thought him still speaking; still stood fixed to hear[1].'

Socrates is overwhelmed by the eloquence of Protagoras. But he would like to put a small question to him:—Are the virtues the parts of a whole or the names of one and the same thing?

At length, when the truth dawned upon me, that he had really finished, not without difficulty I began to collect myself, and looking at Hippocrates, I said to him: O son of Apollodorus, how deeply grateful I am to you for having brought me hither; I would not have missed the speech of Protagoras for a great deal. For I used to imagine that no human care could make men good; but I know better now. Yet I have still one very small difficulty which I am sure that Protagoras will easily explain, as he has already explained so much. If a man were to go and consult Peri- 329
cles or any of our great speakers about these matters, he might perhaps hear as fine a discourse; but then when one has a question to ask of any of them, like books, they can neither answer nor ask; and if any one challenges the least particular of their speech, they go ringing on in a long harangue, like brazen pots, which when they are struck continue to sound unless some one puts his hand upon them; whereas our friend Protagoras can not only make a good speech, as he has already shown, but when he is asked a question he can answer briefly; and when he asks he will wait and hear the answer; and this is a very rare gift. Now I, Protagoras, want to ask of you a little question, which if you will only answer, I shall be quite satisfied. You were saying that virtue can be taught;—that I will take upon your authority, and there is no one by whom I am more ready to be convinced. But I marvel at one thing about which I should like to have my mind set at rest. You were speaking of Zeus sending justice and reverence to men; and several times while you were speaking, justice, and temperance, and holiness, and all these qualities, were described by you as if together they made up virtue. Now I want you to tell me truly whether virtue is one whole, of which justice and temperance and holiness are parts; or whether all these are

[1] Borrowed by Milton, *Paradise Lost*, viii. 2, 3.

only the names of one and the same thing: that is the doubt which still lingers in my mind. *Protagoras.*

There is no difficulty, Socrates, in answering that the qualities of which you are speaking are the parts of virtue which is one. SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

And are they parts, I said, in the same sense in which mouth, nose, and eyes, and ears, are the parts of a face; or are they like the parts of gold, which differ from the whole and from one another only in being larger or smaller? They are the parts of a whole differing in the same manner as the parts of a face.

I should say that they differed, Socrates, in the first way; they are related to one another as the parts of a face are related to the whole face.

And do men have some one part and some another part of virtue? Or if a man has one part, must he also have all the others?

By no means, he said; for many a man is brave and not just, or just and not wise.

You would not deny, then, that courage and wisdom are also parts of virtue?

330 Most undoubtedly they are, he answered; and wisdom is the noblest of the parts.

And they are all different from one another? I said.

Yes.

And has each of them a distinct function like the parts of the face;—the eye, for example, is not like the ear, and has not the same functions; and the other parts are none of them like one another, either in their functions, or in any other way? I want to know whether the comparison holds concerning the parts of virtue. Do they also differ from one another in themselves and in their functions? For that is clearly what the simile would imply. Many men have one part of virtue and not another.

Yes, Socrates, you are right in supposing that they differ.

Then, I said, no other part of virtue is like knowledge, or like justice, or like courage, or like temperance, or like holiness?

No, he answered.

Well then, I said, suppose that you and I enquire into their natures. And first, you would agree with me that justice is

Protagoras. of the nature of a thing, would you not? That is my opinion:
SOCRATES, would it not be yours also?
PROTAGORAS. Mine also, he said.

And suppose that some one were to ask us, saying, 'O Protagoras, and you, Socrates, what about this thing which you were calling justice, is it just or unjust?'—and I were to answer, just: would you vote with me or against me?

With you, he said.

Justice is of the nature of the just. Thereupon I should answer to him who asked me, that justice is of the nature of the just: would not you?

Yes, he said.

And suppose that he went on to say: 'Well now, is there also such a thing as holiness?'—we should answer, 'Yes,' if I am not mistaken?

Yes, he said.

Which you would also acknowledge to be a thing—should we not say so?

He assented.

'And is this a sort of thing which is of the nature of the holy, or of the nature of the unholy?' I should be angry at his putting such a question, and should say, 'Peace, man; nothing can be holy if holiness is not holy.' What would you say? Would you not answer in the same way?

Certainly, he said.

And then after this suppose that he came and asked us, 'What were you saying just now? Perhaps I may not have heard you rightly, but you seemed to me to be saying that the parts of virtue were not the same as one another.' I should reply, 'You certainly heard that said, but not, as you 331
imagine, by me; for I only asked the question; Protagoras gave the answer.' And suppose that he turned to you and said, 'Is this true, Protagoras? and do you maintain that one part of virtue is unlike another, and is this your position?'—how would you answer him?

I could not help acknowledging the truth of what he said, Socrates.

The virtues differ, yet many of them, e. g. Well then, Protagoras, we will assume this; and now supposing that he proceeded to say further, 'Then holiness is not of the nature of justice, nor justice of the nature of

holiness, but of the nature of unholiness; and holiness is of the nature of the not just, and therefore of the unjust, and the unjust is the unholy:' how shall we answer him? I should certainly answer him on my own behalf that justice is holy, and that holiness is just; and I would say in like manner on your behalf also, if you would allow me, that justice is either the same with holiness, or very nearly the same; and above all I would assert that justice is like holiness and holiness is like justice; and I wish that you would tell me whether I may be permitted to give this answer on your behalf, and whether you would agree with me.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

holiness and justice, are very much alike.

He replied, I cannot simply agree, Socrates, to the proposition that justice is holy and that holiness is just, for there appears to me to be a difference between them. But what matter? if you please I please; and let us assume, if you will, that justice is holy, and that holiness is just.

Pardon me, I replied; I do not want this 'if you wish' or 'if you will' sort of conclusion to be proven, but I want you and me to be proven: I mean to say that the conclusion will be best proven if there be no 'if.'

Well, he said, I admit that justice bears a resemblance to holiness, for there is always some point of view in which everything is like every other thing; white is in a certain way like black, and hard is like soft, and the most extreme opposites have some qualities in common; even the parts of the face which, as we were saying before, are distinct and have different functions, are still in a certain point of view similar, and one of them is like another of them. And you may prove that they are like one another on the same principle that all things are like one another; and yet things which are alike in some particular ought not to be called alike, nor things which are unlike in some particular, however slight, unlike.

Protagoras admits the likeness, but denies the identity of the virtues.

And do you think, I said in a tone of surprise, that justice and holiness have but a small degree of likeness?

Certainly not; any more than I agree with what I understand to be your view.

2 Well, I said, as you appear to have a difficulty about this, let us take another of the examples which you mentioned instead. Do you admit the existence of folly?

Protagoras. I do.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. And is not wisdom the very opposite of folly?

That is true, he said.

Protagoras is drawn into making the admission that everything has but one opposite.

And when men act rightly and advantageously they seem to you to be temperate?

Yes, he said.

And temperance makes them temperate?

Certainly.

And they who do not act rightly act foolishly, and in acting thus are not temperate?

I agree, he said.

Then to act foolishly is the opposite of acting temperately?

He assented.

And foolish actions are done by folly, and temperate actions by temperance?

He agreed.

And that is done strongly which is done by strength, and that which is weakly done, by weakness?

He assented.

And that which is done with swiftness is done swiftly, and that which is done with slowness, slowly?

He assented again.

And that which is done in the same manner, is done by the same; and that which is done in an opposite manner by the opposite?

He agreed.

Once more, I said, is there anything beautiful?

Yes.

To which the only opposite is the ugly?

There is no other.

And is there anything good?

There is.

To which the only opposite is the evil?

There is no other.

And there is the acute in sound?

True.

To which the only opposite is the grave?

There is no other, he said, but that.

Then every opposite has one opposite only and no more?

He assented.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

Then now, I said, let us recapitulate our admissions. First of all we admitted that everything has one opposite and not more than one?

We did so.

And we admitted also that what was done in opposite ways was done by opposites?

Yes.

Thus, if folly has two opposites, wisdom and temperance, those two opposites must be the same.

And that which was done foolishly, as we further admitted, was done in the opposite way to that which was done temperately?

Yes.

And that which was done temperately was done by temperance, and that which was done foolishly by folly?

He agreed.

And that which is done in opposite ways is done by opposites?

Yes.

And one thing is done by temperance, and quite another thing by folly?

Yes.

And in opposite ways?

Certainly.

And therefore by opposites:—then folly is the opposite of temperance?

Clearly.

And do you remember that folly has already been acknowledged by us to be the opposite of wisdom?

He assented.

And we said that everything has only one opposite?

Yes.

333 Then, Protagoras, which of the two assertions shall we renounce? One says that everything has but one opposite; the other that wisdom is distinct from temperance, and that both of them are parts of virtue; and that they are not only distinct, but dissimilar, both in themselves and in their functions, like the parts of a face. Which of these two assertions shall we renounce? For both of them together are certainly not in harmony; they do not accord or agree: for how can they be said to agree if everything is assumed to have only one opposite and not more than one, and yet folly, which is

Protagoras. one, has clearly the two opposites—wisdom and temperance? Is not that true, Protagoras? What else would you say?

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. He assented, but with great reluctance.

Then temperance and wisdom are the same, as before justice and holiness appeared to us to be nearly the same. And now, Protagoras, I said, we must finish the enquiry, and not faint. Do you think that an unjust man can be temperate in his injustice?

I should be ashamed, Socrates, he said, to acknowledge this, which nevertheless many may be found to assert.

And shall I argue with them or with you? I replied.

I would rather, he said, that you should argue with the many first, if you will.

Whichever you please, if you will only answer me and say whether you are of their opinion or not. My object is to test the validity of the argument; and yet the result may be that I who ask and you who answer may both be put on our trial.

Protagoras at first made a show of refusing, as he said that the argument was not encouraging; at length, he consented to answer.

Now then, I said, begin at the beginning and answer me. You think that some men are temperate, and yet unjust?

Yes, he said; let that be admitted.

And temperance is good sense?

Yes.

And good sense is good counsel in doing injustice?

Granted.

If they succeed, I said, or if they do not succeed?

If they succeed.

And you would admit the existence of goods?

Yes.

The good is the expedient; yet some things inexpedient are nevertheless good.

And is the good that which is expedient for man?

Yes, indeed, he said: and there are some things which may be inexpedient, and yet I call them good.

I thought that Protagoras was getting ruffled and excited; he seemed to be setting himself in an attitude of war. Seeing this, I minded my business, and gently said:—

When you affirm, Protagoras, that things inexpedient are 3
good, do you mean inexpedient for man only, or inexpedient altogether? and do you call the latter good?

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

Protagoras answers in a lengthy manner,

Certainly not the last, he replied; for I know of many things,—meats, drinks, medicines, and ten thousand other things, which are inexpedient for man, and some which are expedient; and some which are neither expedient nor inexpedient for man, but only for horses; and some for oxen only, and some for dogs; and some for no animals, but only for trees; and some for the roots of trees and not for their branches, as for example, manure, which is a good thing when laid about the roots of a tree, but utterly destructive if thrown upon the shoots and young branches; or I may instance olive oil, which is mischievous to all plants, and generally most injurious to the hair of every animal with the exception of man, but beneficial to human hair and to the human body generally; and even in this application (so various and changeable is the nature of the benefit), that which is the greatest good to the outward parts of a man, is a very great evil to his inward parts: and for this reason physicians always forbid their patients the use of oil in their food, except in very small quantities, just enough to extinguish the disagreeable sensation of smell in meats and sauces.

and is requested by Socrates, who pretends to have a bad memory, to make his answers shorter.

When he had given this answer, the company cheered him. And I said: Protagoras, I have a wretched memory, and when any one makes a long speech to me I never remember what he is talking about. As then, if I had been deaf, and you were going to converse with me, you would have had to raise your voice; so now, having such a bad memory, I will ask you to cut your answers shorter, if you would take me with you.

What do you mean? he said: how am I to shorten my answers? shall I make them too short?

Certainly not, I said.

But short enough?

Yes, I said.

Shall I answer what appears to me to be short enough, or what appears to you to be short enough?

I have heard, I said, that you can speak and teach others to speak about the same things at such length that words never seemed to fail, or with such brevity that no one could use fewer of them. Please therefore, if you talk with me, to adopt the latter or more compendious method.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS, CALLIAS.

Socrates, he replied, many a battle of words have I fought, and if I had followed the method of disputation which my adversaries desired, as you want me to do, I should have been no better than another, and the name of Protagoras would have been nowhere.

As Protagoras declines to adopt his adversary's method, Socrates rises to depart,

I saw that he was not satisfied with his previous answers, and that he would not play the part of answerer any more if he could help; and I considered that there was no call upon me to continue the conversation; so I said: Protagoras, I do not wish to force the conversation upon you if you had rather not, but when you are willing to argue with me in such a way that I can follow you, then I will argue with you. Now you, as is said of you by others and as you say of yourself, are able to have discussions in shorter forms of speech as well as in longer, for you are a master of wisdom; but I cannot manage these long speeches: I only wish that I could. You, on the other hand, who are capable of either, ought to speak shorter as I beg you, and then we might converse. But I see that you are disinclined, and as I have an engagement which will prevent my staying to hear you at greater length (for I have to be in another place), I will depart; although I should have liked to have heard you.

but is detained by Callias.

Thus I spoke, and was rising from my seat, when Callias seized me by the right hand, and in his left hand caught hold of this old cloak of mine. He said: We cannot let you go, Socrates, for if you leave us there will be an end of our discussions: I must therefore beg you to remain, as there is nothing in the world that I should like better than to hear you and Protagoras discourse. Do not deny the company this pleasure.

Socrates would be very willing to comply with his wishes if he could.

Now I had got up, and was in the act of departure. Son of Hipponicus, I replied, I have always admired, and do now heartily applaud and love your philosophical spirit, and I would gladly comply with your request, if I could. But the truth is that I cannot. And what you ask is as great an impossibility to me, as if you bade me run a race with Crison of Himera, when in his prime, or keep pace with one of the long or day course runners. To such a request I should reply that I would fain ask the same of my own legs; but they refuse to comply. And therefore if you want to see Crison

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, CALLIAS, ALCIBIADES, CRITIAS, PRODICUS.

and me in the same stadium, you must bid him slacken his speed to mine, for I cannot run quickly, and he can run slowly. And in like manner if you want to hear me and Protagoras discoursing, you must ask him to shorten his answers, and keep to the point, as he did at first; if not, how can there be any discussion? For discussion is one thing, and making an oration is quite another, in my humble opinion.

He cannot run, but Protagoras can walk.

But you see, Socrates, said Callias, that Protagoras may fairly claim to speak in his own way, just as you claim to speak in yours.

Yet Protagoras may claim to speak in his own manner.

Here Alcibiades interposed, and said: That, Callias, is not a true statement of the case. For our friend Socrates admits that he cannot make a speech—in this he yields the palm to Protagoras: but I should be greatly surprised if he yielded to any living man in the power of holding and apprehending an argument. Now if Protagoras will make a similar admission of his inferiority to Socrates in argumentative skill, that is enough for Socrates; but if he claims a superiority in argument as well, let him ask and answer—not, when a question is asked, slipping away from the point, and instead of answering, haranguing at length until most of his hearers forget the question at issue (not that Socrates is likely to forget—I will be bound for him, although he may pretend in fun to have a bad memory). And Socrates appears to me to be more in the right than Protagoras; that is my view, and every man ought to say what he thinks.

Not so, says Alcibiades, unless he will admit his inferiority to Socrates in the shorter method.

When Alcibiades had done speaking, some one—Critias, I believe—went on to say: O Prodicus and Hippias, Callias appears to me to be a partisan of Protagoras: and this led Alcibiades, who loves opposition, to take the other side. But we should not be partisans either of Socrates or of Protagoras; let us rather unite in entreating both of them not to break up the discussion.

Critias attempts to reconcile Protagoras and Socrates.

337 Prodicus added: That, Critias, seems to me to be well said, for those who are present at such discussions ought to be impartial hearers of both the speakers; remembering, however, that impartiality is not the same as equality, for both sides should be impartially heard, and yet an equal

Prodicus in a balanced form of words advocates impartiality.

Protagoras. meed should not be assigned to both of them; but to the
PRODICUS, HIPPIAS. wiser a higher meed should be given, and a lower to the less wise. And I as well as Critias would beg you, Protagoras and Socrates, to grant our request, which is, that you will argue with one another and not wrangle; for friends argue with friends out of good-will, but only adversaries and enemies wrangle. And then our meeting will be delightful; for in this way you, who are the speakers, will be most likely to win esteem, and not praise only, among us who are your audience; for esteem is a sincere conviction of the hearers' souls, but praise is often an insincere expression of men uttering falsehoods contrary to their conviction. And thus we who are the hearers will be gratified and not pleased; for gratification is of the mind when receiving wisdom and knowledge, but pleasure is of the body when eating or experiencing some other bodily delight. Thus spoke Prodicus, and many of the company applauded his words.

Hippias, in a sententious speech, advocates the appointment of an arbiter.

Hippias the sage spoke next. He said: All of you who are here present I reckon to be kinsmen and friends and fellow-citizens, by nature and not by law; for by nature like is akin to like, whereas law is the tyrant of mankind, and often compels us to do many things which are against nature. How great would be the disgrace then, if we, who know the nature of things, and are the wisest of the Hellenes, and who, bearing such a high character, are met together in this city, which is the metropolis of wisdom, and in the greatest and most glorious house of this city, should have nothing to show worthy of this height of dignity, but should only quarrel with one another like the meanest of mankind! I do pray and advise you, Protagoras, and you, Socrates, to agree upon a compromise. Let us be your peacemakers. And do not you, Socrates, aim at this precise and extreme brevity in discourse, if Protagoras objects, but loosen and let go the reins of speech, that your words may be grander and more becoming to you[1]. Neither do you, Protagoras, go forth on the gale with every sail set out of sight of land into an ocean of words, but let there be a mean observed by both of you. Do as I say. And let me also persuade you to

[1] Reading *ὑμῖν*.

choose an arbiter or overseer or president; he will keep watch over your words and will prescribe their proper length.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, CALLIAS, PROTAGORAS.

This proposal was received by the company with universal approval; Callias said that he would not let me off, and they begged me to choose an arbiter. But I said that to choose an umpire of discourse would be unseemly; for if the person chosen was inferior, then the inferior or worse ought not to preside over the better; or if he was equal, neither would that be well; for he who is our equal will do as we do, and what will be the use of choosing him? And if you say, 'Let us have a better then,' I answer that you cannot have any one who is wiser than Protagoras. And if you choose another who is not really better, and whom you only say is better, to put another over him as though he were an inferior person would be an unworthy reflection on him; not that, as far as I am concerned, any reflection is of much consequence to me. Let me tell you then what I will do in order that the conversation and discussion may go on as you desire. If Protagoras is not disposed to answer, let him ask and I will answer; and I will endeavour to show at the same time how, as I maintain, he ought to answer: and when I have answered as many questions as he likes to ask, let him in like manner answer me; and if he seems to be not very ready at answering the precise question asked of him, you and I will unite in entreating him, as you entreated me, not to spoil the discussion. And this will require no special arbiter—all of you shall be arbiters.

But there can be no arbiter superior to Protagoras, and therefore Socrates suggests that Protagoras shall ask, and he will answer; and when he is tired of asking, Socrates will ask and Protagoras shall answer.

This was generally approved, and Protagoras, though very much against his will, was obliged to agree that he would ask questions; and when he had put a sufficient number of them, that he would answer in his turn those which he was asked in short replies. He began to put his questions as follows:—

Protagoras reluctantly assents, and proposes to base his questions on a passage in Simonides.

I am of opinion, Socrates, he said, that skill in poetry is
339 the principal part of education; and this I conceive to be the power of knowing what compositions of the poets are correct, and what are not, and how they are to be distinguished, and of explaining when asked the reason of the difference. And I propose to transfer the question which

Protagoras. you and I have been discussing to the domain of poetry; we will speak as before of virtue, but in reference to a passage of a poet. Now Simonides says to Scopas the son of Creon the Thessalian:—

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

'Hardly on the one hand can a man become truly good, built four-square in hands and feet and mind, a work without a flaw.'

Do you know the poem? or shall I repeat the whole?

There is no need, I said; for I am perfectly well acquainted with the ode,—I have made a careful study of it.

Very well, he said. And does it appear to you to be a good composition, and true?

Yes, I said, both good and true.

But if there is a contradiction, can the composition be good or true?

No, not in that case, I replied.

And is there not a contradiction? he asked. Reflect.

Well, my friend, I have reflected.

And does not the poet proceed to say, 'I do not agree with the word of Pittacus, albeit the utterance of a wise man: Hardly can a man be good?' Now you will observe that this is said by the same poet.

I know it.

And do you think, he said, that the two sayings are consistent?

Yes, I said, I think so (at the same time I could not help fearing that there might be something in what he said). And you think otherwise?

There is an apparent contradiction in the words of Simonides: he blames what he also affirms.

Why, he said, how can he be consistent in both? First of all, premising as his own thought, 'Hardly can a man become truly good;' and then a little further on in the poem, forgetting, and blaming Pittacus and refusing to agree with him, when he says, 'Hardly can a man be good,' which is the very same thing. And yet when he blames him who says the same with himself, he blames himself; so that he must be wrong either in his first or his second assertion.

Many of the audience cheered and applauded this. And I felt at first giddy and faint, as if I had received a blow from the hand of an expert boxer, when I heard his words and the sound of the cheering; and to confess the truth, I wanted to get time to think what the meaning of the poet really was.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PRODICUS, PROTAGORAS.

So I turned to Prodicus and called him. Prodicus, I said, Simonides is a countryman of yours, and you ought to come to his aid. I must appeal to you, like the river Scamander in Homer, who, when beleaguered by Achilles, summons the Simoïs to aid him, saying:

'Brother dear, let us both together stay the force of the hero[1].'

And I summon you, for I am afraid that Protagoras will make an end of Simonides. Now is the time to rehabilitate Simonides, by the application of your philosophy of synonyms, which enables you to distinguish 'will' and 'wish,' and make other charming distinctions like those which you drew just now. And I should like to know whether you would agree with me; for I am of opinion that there is no contradiction in the words of Simonides. And first of all I wish that you would say whether, in your opinion, Prodicus, 'being' is the same as 'becoming.'

But the inconsistency is not a real one; for 'being' is not the same as 'becoming.'

Not the same, certainly, replied Prodicus.

Did not Simonides first set forth, as his own view, that 'Hardly can a man become truly good'?

Quite right, said Prodicus.

And then he blames Pittacus, not, as Protagoras imagines, for repeating that which he says himself, but for saying something different from himself. Pittacus does not say as Simonides says, that hardly can a man become good, but hardly can a man be good: and our friend Prodicus would maintain that being, Protagoras, is not the same as becoming; and if they are not the same, then Simonides is not inconsistent with himself. I dare say that Prodicus and many others would say, as Hesiod says,

'On the one hand, hardly can a man become good,
For the gods have made virtue the reward of toil;
But on the other hand, when you have climbed the height,
Then, to retain virtue, however difficult the acquisition, is easy[2].'

Prodicus heard and approved; but Protagoras said: Your correction, Socrates, involves a greater error than is contained in the sentence which you are correcting.

Simonides could never have meant to say that virtue can be easily possessed.

Alas! I said, Protagoras; then I am a sorry physician, and do but aggravate a disorder which I am seeking to cure.

[1] Il. xxi. 308.

[2] Works and Days, 264 foll.

Protagoras.

Such is the fact, he said.

How so? I asked.

SOCRATES, PRODICUS, PROTAGORAS.

The poet, he replied, could never have made such a mistake as to say that virtue, which in the opinion of all men is the hardest of all things, can be easily attained.

Socrates has learned from Prodicus that 'hard' means 'evil.'

Well, I said, and how fortunate are we in having Prodicus among us, at the right moment; for he has a wisdom, Protagoras, which, as I imagine, is more than human and of very ancient date, and may be as old as Simonides or even 341
older. Learned as you are in many things, you appear to know nothing of this; but I know, for I am a disciple of his. And now, if I am not mistaken, you do not understand the word 'hard' (*χαλεπόν*) in the sense which Simonides intended; and I must correct you, as Prodicus corrects me when I use the word 'awful' (*δεινόν*) as a term of praise. If I say that Protagoras or any one else is an 'awfully' wise man, he asks me if I am not ashamed of calling that which is good 'awful'; and then he explains to me that the term 'awful' is always taken in a bad sense, and that no one speaks of being 'awfully' healthy or wealthy, or of 'awful' peace, but of 'awful' disease, 'awful' war, 'awful' poverty, meaning by the term 'awful,' evil. And I think that Simonides and his countrymen the Ceans, when they spoke of 'hard' meant 'evil,' or something which you do not understand. Let us ask Prodicus, for he ought to be able to answer questions about the dialect of Simonides. What did he mean, Prodicus, by the term 'hard'?

Evil, said Prodicus.

And therefore, I said, Prodicus, he blames Pittacus for saying, 'Hard is the good,' just as if that were equivalent to saying, Evil is the good.

Yes, he said, that was certainly his meaning; and he is twitting Pittacus with ignorance of the use of terms, which in a Lesbian, who has been accustomed to speak a barbarous language, is natural.

Do you hear, Protagoras, I asked, what our friend Prodicus is saying? And have you an answer for him?

Nonsense, says Protagoras.

You are entirely mistaken, Prodicus, said Protagoras; and I know very well that Simonides in using the word 'hard' meant what all of us mean, not evil, but that which is not

easy—that which takes a great deal of trouble: of this I am positive.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

I said: I also incline to believe, Protagoras, that this was the meaning of Simonides, of which our friend Prodicus was very well aware, but he thought that he would make fun, and try if you could maintain your thesis; for that Simonides could never have meant the other is clearly proved by the context, in which he says that God only has this gift. Now he cannot surely mean to say that to be good is evil, when he afterwards proceeds to say that God only has this gift, and that this is the attribute of him and of no other. For if this be his meaning, Prodicus would impute to Simonides a character of recklessness which is very unlike his country-
342 men. And I should like to tell you, I said, what I imagine to be the real meaning of Simonides in this poem, if you will test what, in your way of speaking, would be called my skill in poetry; or if you would rather, I will be the listener.

We were only making trial of you, replies Socrates; but as you are not to be taken in, shall I offer an interpretation?

To this proposal Protagoras replied: As you please;—and Hippias, Prodicus, and the others told me by all means to do as I proposed.

Then now, I said, I will endeavour to explain to you my opinion about this poem of Simonides. There is a very ancient philosophy which is more cultivated in Crete and Lacedaemon than in any other part of Hellas, and there are more philosophers in those countries than anywhere else in the world. This, however, is a secret which the Lacedaemonians deny; and they pretend to be ignorant, just because they do not wish to have it thought that they rule the world by wisdom, like the Sophists of whom Protagoras was speaking, and not by valour of arms; considering that if the reason of their superiority were disclosed, all men would be practising their wisdom. And this secret of theirs has never been discovered by the imitators of Lacedaemonian fashions in other cities, who go about with their ears bruised in imitation of them, and have the caestus bound on their arms, and are always in training, and wear short cloaks; for they imagine that these are the practices which have enabled the Lacedaemonians to conquer the other Hellenes. Now when the Lacedaemonians want to unbend and hold free conversation with their wise men, and are no longer satisfied

The true ancient philosophy is to be found, not in the long discourses of the Sophists,

Protagoras. with mere secret intercourse, they drive out all these laconizers, and any other foreigners who may happen to be in
SOCRATES. their country, and they hold a philosophical *séance* unknown
but in the pregnant brevity of the Lacedaemonians. to strangers; and they themselves forbid their young men to go out into other cities—in this they are like the Cretans—in order that they may not unlearn the lessons which they have taught them. And in Lacedaemon and Crete not only men but also women have a pride in their high cultivation. And hereby you may know that I am right in attributing to the Lacedaemonians this excellence in philosophy and speculation: If a man converses with the most ordinary Lacedaemonian, he will find him seldom good for much in general conversation, but at any point in the discourse he will be darting out some notable saying, terse and full of meaning, with unerring aim; and the person with whom he is talking seems to be like a child in his hands. And many of our own age and of former ages have noted that the true Lacedaemonian type of character has the love of philosophy even stronger than the love of gymnastics; they are conscious that only a perfectly educated man is capable of uttering such expressions. Such were Thales of 343
Miletus, and Pittacus of Mitylene, and Bias of Priene, and our own Solon, and Cleobulus the Lindian, and Myson the Chenian; and seventh in the catalogue of wise men was the Lacedaemonian Chilo. All these were lovers and emulators and disciples of the culture of the Lacedaemonians, and any one may perceive that their wisdom was of this character; consisting of short memorable sentences, which they severally uttered. And they met together and dedicated in the temple of Apollo at Delphi, as the first-fruits of their wisdom, the far-famed inscriptions, which are in all men's mouths,—'Know thyself,' and 'Nothing too much.'

Why do I say all this? I am explaining that this Lacedaemonian brevity was the style of primitive philosophy. Now there was a saying of Pittacus which was privately circulated and received the approbation of the wise, 'Hard is it to be good.' And Simonides, who was ambitious of the fame of wisdom, was aware that if he could overthrow this saying, then, as if he had won a victory over some famous athlete, he would carry off the palm among his contemporaries.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES.

And if I am not mistaken, he composed the entire poem with the secret intention of damaging Pittacus and his saying.

Let us all unite in examining his words, and see whether I am speaking the truth. Simonides must have been a lunatic, if, in the very first words of the poem, wanting to say only that to become good is hard, he inserted *μέν*, 'on the one hand' ['on the one hand to become good is hard']; there would be no reason for the introduction of *μέν*, unless you suppose him to speak with a hostile reference to the words of Pittacus. Pittacus is saying 'Hard is it to be good,' and he, in refutation of this thesis, rejoins that the truly hard thing, Pittacus, is to become good, not joining 'truly' with 'good,' but with 'hard.' Not, that the hard thing is to be truly good, as though there were some truly good men, and there were others who were good but not truly good (this would be a very simple observation, and quite unworthy of Simonides); but you must suppose him to make a trajection of the word 'truly' (*ἀλαθέως*), construing the saying of Pittacus thus (and let us imagine Pittacus to be speaking and Simonides answering him): 'O my friends,' says Pittacus, 'hard is it to
344 be good,' and Simonides answers, 'In that, Pittacus, you are mistaken; the difficulty is not to be good, but on the one hand, to become good, four-square in hands and feet and mind, without a flaw—that is hard truly.' This way of reading the passage accounts for the insertion of *μέν*, 'on the one hand,' and for the position at the end of the clause of the word 'truly,' and all that follows shows this to be the meaning. A great deal might be said in praise of the details of the poem, which is a charming piece of workmanship, and very finished, but such minutiae would be tedious. I should like, however, to point out the general intention of the poem, which is certainly designed in every part to be a refutation of the saying of Pittacus. For he speaks in what follows a little further on as if he meant to argue that although there is a difficulty in becoming good, yet this is possible for a time, and only for a time. But having become good, to remain in a good state and be good, as you, Pittacus, affirm, is not possible, and is not granted to man; God only has this blessing; 'but man cannot help being bad when the force of circumstances overpowers him.' Now whom does

Socrates proposes an explanation, ingenious rather than true, of the verses of Simonides.

He seems to be adopting the Sophists' arts of interpretation.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES.

the force of circumstance overpower in the command of a vessel?—not the private individual, for he is always overpowered; and as one who is already prostrate cannot be overthrown, and only he who is standing upright but not he who is prostrate can be laid prostrate, so the force of circumstances can only overpower him who, at some time or other, has resources, and not him who is at all times helpless. The descent of a great storm may make the pilot helpless, or the severity of the season the husbandman or the physician; for the good may become bad, as another poet witnesses:—

Socrates by the help of logic and rhetoric strives to elicit the meaning of Simonides.

'The good are sometimes good and sometimes bad.'

But the bad does not become bad; he is always bad. So that when the force of circumstances overpowers the man of resources and skill and virtue, then he cannot help being bad. And you, Pittacus, are saying, 'Hard is it to be good.' Now there is a difficulty in becoming good; and yet this is possible: but to be good is an impossibility—

'For he who does well is the good man, and he who does ill is the bad.'

But what sort of doing is good in letters? and what sort of 345
doing makes a man good in letters? Clearly the knowing of them. And what sort of well-doing makes a man a good physician? Clearly the knowledge of the art of healing the sick. 'But he who does ill is the bad.' Now who becomes a bad physician? Clearly he who is in the first place a physician, and in the second place a good physician; for he may become a bad one also: but none of us unskilled individuals can by any amount of doing ill become physicians, any more than we can become carpenters or anything of that sort; and he who by doing ill cannot become a physician at all, clearly cannot become a bad physician. In like manner the good may become deteriorated by time, or toil, or disease, or other accident (the only real doing ill is to be deprived of knowledge), but the bad man will never become bad, for he is always bad; and if he were to become bad, he must previously have been good. Thus the words of the poem tend to show that on the one hand a man cannot be continuously good, but that he may become good and may also become bad; and again that

'They are the best for the longest time whom the gods love.'

Protagoras.

SOCRATES.

The entire poem is really a polemic against Pittacus.

All this relates to Pittacus, as is further proved by the sequel. For he adds:—

'Therefore I will not throw away my span of life to no purpose in searching after the impossible, hoping in vain to find a perfectly faultless man among those who partake of the fruit of the broad-bosomed earth: if I find him, I will send you word.'

(this is the vehement way in which he pursues his attack upon Pittacus throughout the whole poem):

'But him who does no evil, voluntarily I praise and love;—not even the gods war against necessity.'

All this has a similar drift, for Simonides was not so ignorant as to say that he praised those who did no evil voluntarily, as though there were some who did evil voluntarily. For no wise man, as I believe, will allow that any human being errs voluntarily, or voluntarily does evil and dishonourable actions; but they are very well aware that all who do evil and dishonourable things do them against their will. And Simonides never says that he praises him who does no evil voluntarily; the word 'voluntarily' applies to himself. For
346 he was under the impression that a good man might often compel himself to love and praise another[1], and to be the friend and approver of another; and that there might be an involuntary love, such as a man might feel to an unnatural father or mother, or country, or the like. Now bad men, when their parents or country have any defects, look on them with malignant joy, and find fault with them and expose and denounce them to others, under the idea that the rest of mankind will be less likely to take themselves to task and accuse them of neglect; and they blame their defects far more than they deserve, in order that the odium which is necessarily incurred by them may be increased: but the good man dissembles his feelings, and constrains himself to praise them; and if they have wronged him and he is angry, he pacifies his anger and is reconciled, and compels himself to love and praise his own flesh and blood. And Simonides, as is probable, considered that he himself had often had to praise and magnify a tyrant or the like, much against his will, and he also wishes to imply to Pittacus that he does not censure him because he is censorious.

[1] Reading *φιλεῖν καὶ ἐπαινεῖν καὶ φίλον τινὶ κ. τ. λ.*

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, HIPPIAS, ALCIBIADES.

'For I am satisfied,' he says, 'when a man is neither bad nor very stupid; and when he knows justice (which is the health of states), and is of sound mind, I will find no fault with him, for I am not given to finding fault, and there are innumerable fools'

(implying that if he delighted in censure he might have abundant opportunity of finding fault).

'All things are good with which evil is unmingled.'

In these latter words he does not mean to say that all things are good which have no evil in them, as you might say 'All things are white which have no black in them,' for that would be ridiculous; but he means to say that he accepts and finds no fault with the moderate or intermediate state.

['I do not hope,' he says, 'to find a perfectly blameless man among those who partake of the fruits of the broad-bosomed earth (if I find him, I will send you word); in this sense I praise no man. But he who is moderately good, and does no evil, is good enough for me, who love and approve every one']

(and here observe that he uses a Lesbian word, ἐπαίνημι (approve), because he is addressing Pittacus,—

'Who love and *approve* every one *voluntarily*, who does no evil:'

and that the stop should be put after 'voluntarily'); 'but there are some whom I involuntarily praise and love. And you, Pittacus, I would never have blamed, if you had spoken 34
what was moderately good and true; but I do blame you because, putting on the appearance of truth, you are speaking falsely about the highest matters.'—And this, I said, Prodicus and Protagoras, I take to be the meaning of Simonides in this poem.

Hippias thinks this an excellent interpretation of the poem; but he has a still better one of his own.

Hippias said: I think, Socrates, that you have given a very good explanation of the poem; but I have also an excellent interpretation of my own which I will propound to you, if you will allow me.

Nay, Hippias, said Alcibiades; not now, but at some other time. At present we must abide by the compact which was made between Socrates and Protagoras, to the effect that as long as Protagoras is willing to ask, Socrates should answer; or that if he would rather answer, then that Socrates should ask.

I said: I wish Protagoras either to ask or answer as he is

inclined; but I would rather have done with poems and odes, if he does not object, and come back to the question about which I was asking you at first, Protagoras, and by your help make an end of that. The talk about the poets seems to me like a commonplace entertainment to which a vulgar company have recourse; who, because they are not able to converse or amuse one another, while they are drinking, with the sound of their own voices and conversation, by reason of their stupidity, raise the price of flute-girls in the market, hiring for a great sum the voice of a flute instead of their own breath, to be the medium of intercourse among them: but where the company are real gentlemen and men of education, you will see no flute-girls, nor dancing-girls, nor harp-girls; and they have no nonsense or games, but are contented with one another's conversation, of which their own voices are the medium, and which they carry on by turns and in an orderly manner, even though they are very liberal in their potations. And a company like this of ours, and men such as we profess to be, do not require the help of another's voice, or of the poets whom you cannot interrogate about the meaning of what they are saying; people who cite them declaring, some that the poet has one meaning, and others that he has another, and the point which is in dispute can never be decided. This sort of entertainment they decline, and prefer to talk with one another, and put one another to the proof in conversation.
348 And these are the models which I desire that you and I should imitate. Leaving the poets, and keeping to ourselves, let us try the mettle of one another and make proof of the truth in conversation. If you have a mind to ask, I am ready to answer; or if you would rather, do you answer, and give me the opportunity of resuming and completing our unfinished argument.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES.

He is prevented from interrupting by Alcibiades. Socrates would rather have done with the poets and return to the argument.

I made these and some similar observations; but Protagoras would not distinctly say which he would do. Thereupon Alcibiades turned to Callias, and said:—Do you think, Callias, that Protagoras is fair in refusing to say whether he will or will not answer? for I certainly think that he is unfair; he ought either to proceed with the argument, or distinctly to refuse to proceed, that we may

Protagoras. know his intention; and then Socrates will be able to
ALCIBIADES, SOCRATES. discourse with some one else, and the rest of the company will be free to talk with one another.

Protagoras is compelled to resume the argument. I think that Protagoras was really made ashamed by these words of Alcibiades, and when the prayers of Callias and the company were superadded, he was at last induced to argue, and said that I might ask and he would answer.

So I said: Do not imagine, Protagoras, that I have any other interest in asking questions of you but that of clearing up my own difficulties. For I think that Homer was very right in saying that

'When two go together, one sees before the other [1],'

for all men who have a companion are readier in deed. word, or thought; but if a man

'Sees a thing when he is alone,'

he goes about straightway seeking until he finds some one to whom he may show his discoveries, and who may confirm him in them. And I would rather hold discourse with you than with any one, because I think that no man has a better understanding of most things which a good man may be expected to understand, and in particular of virtue. For who is there, but you?—who not only claim to be a good man and a gentleman, for many are this, and yet have not the power of making others good—whereas you are not only good yourself, but also the cause of goodness in others. Moreover such confidence have you in yourself, that although other Sophists conceal their profession, you proclaim in the face of Hellas that you are a Sophist or teacher of virtue and education, and are the first who demanded pay in return. How then can I do otherwise than invite you to the 349
examination of these subjects, and ask questions and consult with you? I must, indeed. And I should like once more to have my memory refreshed by you about the questions which I was asking you at first, and also to have your help in considering them. If I am not mistaken the question was this: Are wisdom and temperance and courage and justice and holiness five names of the same thing? or has each of

Half ironical eulogium of Protagoras.

[1] Il. x. 224.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

the names a separate underlying essence and corresponding thing having a peculiar function, no one of them being like any other of them? And you replied that the five names were not the names of the same thing, but that each of them had a separate object, and that all these objects were parts of virtue, not in the same way that the parts of gold are like each other and the whole of which they are parts, but as the parts of the face are unlike the whole of which they are parts and one another, and have each of them a distinct function. I should like to know whether this is still your opinion; or if not, I will ask you to define your meaning, and I shall not take you to task if you now make a different statement. For I dare say that you may have said what you did only in order to make trial of me.

To the old question,—'Are the virtues one or many?'—the old answer is returned that four out of five are to some extent similar, but the fifth, courage, is very different from the other four.

I answer, Socrates, he said, that all these qualities are parts of virtue, and that four out of the five are to some extent similar, and that the fifth of them, which is courage, is very different from the other four, as I prove in this way: You may observe that many men are utterly unrighteous, unholy, intemperate, ignorant, who are nevertheless remarkable for their courage.

Stop, I said; I should like to think about that. When you speak of brave men, do you mean the confident, or another sort of nature?

And the courageous are the confient; but not all the confident are truly courageous.

Yes, he said; I mean the impetuous, ready to go at that which others are afraid to approach.

In the next place, you would affirm virtue to be a good thing, of which good thing you assert yourself to be a teacher.

Certainly, the best of all things; it would be madness to say anything else.

And is it partly good and partly bad, I said, or wholly good?

Wholly good, and in the highest degree.

50 Tell me then; who are they who have confidence when diving into a well?

I should say, the divers.

And the reason of this is that they have knowledge?

Yes, that is the reason.

And who have confidence when fighting on horseback—the skilled horseman or the unskilled?

The skilled.

Protagoras. And who when fighting with light shields—the peltasts or the nonpeltasts?

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. The peltasts. And so of all other things, he said, if that is your point: those who have knowledge are more confident than those who have no knowledge, and they are more confident after they have learned than before.

And have you not seen persons utterly ignorant, I said, of these things, and yet confident about them?

Yes, he said, I have seen such persons far too confident.

And are not these confident persons also courageous?

In that case, he replied, courage would be a base thing, for the men of whom we are speaking are surely madmen.

Then who are the courageous? Are they not the confident?

Yes, he said; to that statement I adhere.

And those, I said, who are thus confident without knowledge are really not courageous, but mad; and in that case the wisest are also the most confident, and being the most confident are also the bravest, and upon that view again wisdom will be courage.

Protagoras complains that Socrates has misrepresented him.

Nay, Socrates, he replied, you are mistaken in your remembrance of what was said by me. When you asked me, I certainly did say that the courageous are the confident; but I was never asked whether the confident are the courageous; if you had asked me, I should have answered 'Not all of them:' and what I did answer you have not proved to be false, although you proceeded to show that those who have knowledge are more courageous than they were before they had knowledge, and more courageous than others who have no knowledge, and were then led on to think that courage is the same as wisdom. But in this way of arguing you might come to imagine that strength is wisdom. You might begin by asking whether the strong are able, and I should say 'Yes;' and then whether those who know how to wrestle are not more able to wrestle than those who do not know how to wrestle, and more able after than before they had learned, and I should assent. And when I had admitted this, you might use my admissions in such a way as to prove that upon my view wisdom is strength; whereas in that case I should not have admitted, any more than in the other, that the able are strong, although I have admitted

351 that the strong are able. For there is a difference between ability and strength; the former is given by knowledge as well as by madness or rage, but strength comes from nature and a healthy state of the body. And in like manner I say of confidence and courage, that they are not the same; and I argue that the courageous are confident, but not all the confident courageous. For confidence may be given to men by art, and also, like ability, by madness and rage; but courage comes to them from nature and the healthy state of the soul.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

I said: You would admit, Protagoras, that some men live well and others ill?

He assented.

And do you think that a man lives well who lives in pain and grief?

He does not.

But if he lives pleasantly to the end of his life, will he not in that case have lived well?

He will.

Then to live pleasantly is a good, and to live unpleasantly an evil?

Yes, he said, if the pleasure be good and honourable.

And do you, Protagoras, like the rest of the world, call some pleasant things evil and some painful things good?—for I am rather disposed to say that things are good in as far as they are pleasant, if they have no consequences of another sort, and in as far as they are painful they are bad.

Socrates insinuates that the pleasant is the good.

I do not know, Socrates, he said, whether I can venture to assert in that unqualified manner that the pleasant is the good and the painful the evil. Having regard not only to my present answer, but also to the whole of my life, I shall be safer, if I am not mistaken, in saying that there are some pleasant things which are not good, and that there are some painful things which are good, and some which are not good, and that there are some which are neither good nor evil.

Protagoras demurs to this assumption.

And you would call pleasant, I said, the things which participate in pleasure or create pleasure?

Certainly, he said.

Then my meaning is, that in as far as they are pleasant they

Protagoras. are good; and my question would imply that pleasure is a good in itself.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. According to your favourite mode of speech, Socrates, 'let us reflect about this,' he said; and if the reflection is to the point, and the result proves that pleasure and good are really the same, then we will agree; but if not, then we will argue.

And would you wish to begin the enquiry? I said; or shall I begin?

You ought to take the lead, he said; for you are the author of the discussion.

Let Protagoras reveal to us his mind about knowledge. May I employ an illustration? I said. Suppose some 35 one who is enquiring into the health or some other bodily quality of another:—he looks at his face and at the tips of his fingers, and then he says, Uncover your chest and back to me that I may have a better view:—the enquiry which I desire to make is of this nature. Having seen what your opinion is about good and pleasure, I am minded to say to you: Uncover your mind to me, Protagoras, and reveal your opinion about knowledge, that I may know whether you agree with the rest of the world. Now the rest of the world conceive knowledge to be a principle not of strength, or of rule, or of command: their notion is that a man may have knowledge, and yet that the knowledge which is in him may be overmastered by anger, or pleasure, or pain, or love, or perhaps by fear,—just as if knowledge were a slave, and might be dragged about anyhow. Now is that your view? or do you think that knowledge is a noble and commanding thing, which cannot be overcome, and will not allow a man, if he only knows the difference of good and evil, to do anything which is contrary to knowledge, but that wisdom will have strength to help him?

Is not knowledge the strongest of all things? Protagoras agrees, but the world will not agree about this and many other things I agree with you, Socrates, said Protagoras; and not only so, but I, above all other men, am bound to say that wisdom and knowledge are the highest of human things.

Good, I said, and true. But are you aware that the majority of the world are of another mind; and that men are commonly supposed to know the things which are best, and not to do them when they might? And most persons whom I have asked the reason of this have said that when men act contrary to knowledge they are overcome by pain, or pleasure,

or some of those affections which I was just now mentioning.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

Yes, Socrates, he replied; and that is not the only point about which mankind are in error.

which are true, nevertheless.

Suppose, then, that you and I endeavour to instruct and inform them what is the nature of this affection which they call 'being overcome by pleasure,' and which they
353 affirm to be the reason why they do not always do what is best. When we say to them: Friends, you are mistaken, and are saying what is not true, they would probably reply: Socrates and Protagoras, if this affection of the soul is not to be called 'being overcome by pleasure,' pray, what is it, and by what name would you describe it?

But why, Socrates, should we trouble ourselves about the opinion of the many, who just say anything that happens to occur to them?

I believe, I said, that they may be of use in helping us to discover how courage is related to the other parts of virtue. If you are disposed to abide by our agreement, that I should show the way in which, as I think, our recent difficulty is most likely to be cleared up, do you follow; but if not, never mind.

You are quite right, he said; and I would have you proceed as you have begun.

Well then, I said, let me suppose them to repeat their question, What account do you give of that which, in our way of speaking, is termed being overcome by pleasure? I should answer thus: Listen, and Protagoras and I will endeavour to show you. When men are overcome by eating and drinking and other sensual desires which are pleasant, and they, knowing them to be evil, nevertheless indulge in them, would you not say that they were overcome by pleasure? They will not deny this. And suppose that you and I were to go on and ask them again: 'In what way do you say that they are evil,—in that they are pleasant and give pleasure at the moment, or because they cause disease and poverty and other like evils in the future? Would they still be evil, if they had no attendant evil consequences, simply because they give the consciousness of pleasure of whatever nature?'—Would they not answer that they are not evil on account of the pleasure which is immediately given by them,

Protagoras. but on account of the after consequences—diseases and the like?

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. I believe, said Protagoras, that the world in general would answer as you do.

Pleasure is evil when it deprives us of some other pleasure.

And in causing diseases do they not cause pain? and in causing poverty do they not cause pain;—they would agree to that also, if I am not mistaken?

Protagoras assented.

Then I should say to them, in my name and yours: Do you think them evil for any other reason, except because they end in pain and rob us of other pleasures:—there again they would agree?

We both of us thought that they would. 35

Goods are painful which are remedial, and, though they occasion immediate suffering, bring good in the future.

And then I should take the question from the opposite point of view, and say: 'Friends, when you speak of goods being painful, do you not mean remedial goods, such as gymnastic exercises, and military service, and the physician's use of burning, cutting, drugging, and starving? Are these the things which are good but painful?'—they would assent to me?

He agreed.

'And do you call them good because they occasion the greatest immediate suffering and pain; or because, afterwards, they bring health and improvement of the bodily condition and the salvation of states and power over others and wealth?'—they would agree to the latter alternative, if I am not mistaken?

He assented.

'Are these things good for any other reason except that they end in pleasure, and get rid of and avert pain? Are you looking to any other standard but pleasure and pain when you call them good?'—they would acknowledge that they were not?

I think so, said Protagoras.

'And do you not pursue after pleasure as a good, and avoid pain as an evil?'

He assented.

Pain is an evil and pleasure is a good:

'Then you think that pain is an evil and pleasure is a good: and even pleasure you deem an evil, when it robs you of greater pleasures than it gives, or causes pains greater than

the pleasure. If, however, you call pleasure an evil in relation to some other end or standard, you will be able to show us that standard. But you have none to show.'

Protagoras. SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

I do not think that they have, said Protagoras.

'And have you not a similar way of speaking about pain? You call pain a good when it takes away greater pains than those which it has, or gives pleasures greater than the pains: then if you have some standard other than pleasure and pain to which you refer when you call actual pain a good, you can show what that is. But you cannot.'

but pain is also a good when it takes away a greater pain.

True, said Protagoras.

Suppose again, I said, that the world says to me: 'Why do you spend many words and speak in many ways on this subject?' Excuse me, friends, I should reply; but in the first place there is a difficulty in explaining the meaning of the expression 'overcome by pleasure;' and the whole argument turns upon this. And even now, if you see any 355 possible way in which evil can be explained as other than pain, or good as other than pleasure, you may still retract. Are you satisfied, then, at having a life of pleasure which is without pain? If you are, and if you are unable to show any good or evil which does not end in pleasure and pain, hear the consequences:—If what you say is true, then the argument is absurd which affirms that a man often does evil knowingly, when he might abstain, because he is seduced and overpowered by pleasure; or again, when you say that a man knowingly refuses to do what is good because he is overcome at the moment by pleasure. And that this is ridiculous will be evident if only we give up the use of various names, such as pleasant and painful, and good and evil. As there are two things, let us call them by two names —first, good and evil, and then pleasant and painful. Assuming this, let us go on to say that a man does evil although he knows it to be evil. But some one will ask, Why? Because he is overcome, is the first answer. And by what is he overcome? the enquirer will proceed to ask. And we shall not be able to reply 'By pleasure,' for the name of pleasure has been exchanged for that of good. In our answer, then, we shall only say that he is overcome. 'By what?' he will reiterate. By the good, we shall have to reply; indeed we

When we say of a man that he is overcome by pleasure we only mean that he is overcome by a lesser pleasure.

Protagoras. shall. Nay, but our questioner will rejoin with a laugh, if
SOCRATES. he be one of the swaggering sort, 'It is too ridiculous for a man to do what he knows to be evil when he ought not, because he is overcome by good. Is that, he will ask, because the good was worthy or not worthy of conquering the evil'? And to that question we shall obviously reply, Because it was not worthy; for if it had been worthy, then he who, as we say, was overcome by pleasure, would not have been wrong. 'But how,' he will reply, 'can the good be unworthy of the evil, or the evil of the good'? Is not the real explanation that they are out of proportion to one another, either as greater and smaller, or more and fewer? This we cannot deny. And when you speak of being overcome—'what do you mean,' he will say, 'but that you choose the greater evil in exchange for the lesser good'? Admitted. And now substitute the names of pleasure and pain for good and evil, and say, not as before, that a man does what is evil knowingly, but that he does what is painful knowingly, and because he is overcome by pleasure, which is unworthy to overcome. What measure is there of the 35
relations of pleasure to pain other than excess and defect, which means that they become greater and smaller, and more and fewer, and differ in degree? For if any one says: 'Yes, Socrates, but immediate pleasure differs widely from future pleasure and pain'—To that I should reply: And do they differ in anything but in pleasure and pain? There can be no other measure of them. And do you, like a skilful weigher, put into the balance the pleasures and the pains, and also their nearness and distance, and weigh them, and then say which outweighs the other. If you weigh pleasures against pleasures, you of course take the more and greater; or if you weigh pains against pains, you take the fewer and the less; or if pleasures against pains, then you choose that course of action in which the painful is exceeded by the pleasant, whether the distant by the near or the near by the distant; and you avoid that course of action in which the pleasant is exceeded by the painful. Would you not admit, my friends, that this is true? I am confident that they cannot deny it.

Whether we speak of pleasure and pain, or of good and evil, the result is the same.

He agreed with me.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

Well then, I shall say, if you agree so far, be so good as to answer me a question: Do not the same magnitudes appear larger to your sight when near, and smaller when at a distance? They will acknowledge that. And the same holds of thickness and number; also sounds, which are in themselves equal, are greater when near, and lesser when at a distance. They will grant that also. Now suppose happiness to consist in doing or choosing the greater, and in not doing or in avoiding the less, what would be the saving principle of human life? Would not the art of measuring be the saving principle; or would the power of appearance? Is not the latter that deceiving art which makes us wander up and down and take the things at one time of which we repent at another, both in our actions and in our choice of things great and small? But the art of measurement would do away with the effect of appearances, and, showing the truth, would fain teach the soul at last to find rest in the truth, and would thus save our life. Would not mankind generally acknowledge that the art which accomplishes this result is the art of measurement?

Pleasures are made greater or less by distance; that is, they appear to be greater.

The art of measuring contrasted with the power of appearance.

Yes, he said, the art of measurement.

Suppose, again, the salvation of human life to depend on the choice of odd and even, and on the knowledge of when a man ought to choose the greater or less, either in reference 57 to themselves or to each other, and whether near or at a distance; what would be the saving principle of our lives? Would not knowledge?—a knowledge of measuring, when the question is one of excess and defect, and a knowledge of number, when the question is of odd and even? The world will assent, will they not?

The numbering principle and the measuring principle are the laws of human life.

Protagoras himself thought that they would.

Well then, my friends, I say to them; seeing that the salvation of human life has been found to consist in the right choice of pleasures and pains,—in the choice of the more and the fewer, and the greater and the less, and the nearer and remoter, must not this measuring be a consideration of their excess and defect and equality in relation to each other?

This is undeniably true.

Protagoras.

And this, as possessing measure, must undeniably also be an art and science?

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

They will agree, he said.

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that men err in their choice of good and evil through ignorance, and yet the world refuses to be taught by the Sophists who are the physicians of ignorance.

The nature of that art or science will be a matter of future consideration; but the existence of such a science furnishes a demonstrative answer to the question which you asked of me and Protagoras. At the time when you asked the question, if you remember, both of us were agreeing that there was nothing mightier than knowledge, and that knowledge, in whatever existing, must have the advantage over pleasure and all other things; and then you said that pleasure often got the advantage even over a man who has knowledge; and we refused to allow this, and you rejoined: O Protagoras and Socrates, what is the meaning of being overcome by pleasure if not this?—tell us what you call such a state:—if we had immediately and at the time answered 'Ignorance,' you would have laughed at us. But now, in laughing at us, you will be laughing at yourselves: for you also admitted that men err in their choice of pleasures and pains; that is, in their choice of good and evil, from defect of knowledge; and you admitted further, that they err, not only from defect of knowledge in general, but of that particular knowledge which is called measuring. And you are also aware that the erring act which is done without knowledge is done in ignorance. This, therefore, is the meaning of being overcome by pleasure;—ignorance, and that the greatest. And our friends Protagoras and Prodicus and Hippias declare that they are the physicians of ignorance; but you, who are under the mistaken impression that ignorance is not the cause, and that the art of which I am speaking cannot be taught, neither go yourselves, nor send your children, to the Sophists, who are the teachers of these things—you take care of your money and give them none; and the result is, that you are the worse off both in public and private life:—Let us suppose this to be our answer to the world in general: And now I should like to ask you, Hippias, and you, Prodicus, as well as Protagoras (for the argument is to be yours as well as ours), whether you think that I am speaking the truth or not?

They all thought that what I said was entirely true.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

Then you agree, I said, that the pleasant is the good, and the painful evil. And here I would beg my friend Prodicus not to introduce his distinction of names, whether he is disposed to say pleasurable, delightful, joyful. However, by whatever name he prefers to call them, I will ask you, most excellent Prodicus, to answer in my sense of the words.

Prodicus laughed and assented, as did the others.

Then, my friends, what do you say to this? Are not all actions honourable and useful, of which the tendency is to make life painless and pleasant? The honourable work is also useful and good?

This was admitted.

Then, I said, if the pleasant is the good, nobody does anything under the idea or conviction that some other thing would be better and is also attainable, when he might do the better. And this inferiority of a man to himself is merely ignorance, as the superiority of a man to himself is wisdom.

They all assented.

And is not ignorance the having a false opinion and being deceived about important matters?

To this also they unanimously assented.

No man voluntarily pursues evil.

Then, I said, no man voluntarily pursues evil, or that which he thinks to be evil. To prefer evil to good is not in human nature; and when a man is compelled to choose one of two evils, no one will choose the greater when he may have the less.

All of us agreed to every word of this.

Well, I said, there is a certain thing called fear or terror; and here, Prodicus, I should particularly like to know whether you would agree with me in defining this fear or terror as expectation of evil.

Protagoras and Hippias agreed, but Prodicus said that this was fear and not terror.

Then will a man pursue that which he fears, although he need not?

Never mind, Prodicus, I said; but let me ask whether, if our former assertions are true, a man will pursue that which he fears when he is not compelled? Would not this be in flat contradiction to the admission which has been already made, that he thinks the things which he fears to be evil; and no one will pursue or voluntarily accept that which he thinks to be evil?

Protagoras. That also was universally admitted. 359

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. Then, I said, these, Hippias and Prodicus, are our premisses; and I would beg Protagoras to explain to us how he can be right in what he said at first. I do not mean in what he said quite at first, for his first statement, as you may remember, was that whereas there were five parts of virtue none of them was like any other of them; each of them had a separate function. To this, however, I am not referring, but to the assertion which he afterwards made that of the five virtues four were nearly akin to each other, but that the fifth, which was courage, differed greatly from the others. And of this he gave me the following proof. He said: You will find, Socrates, that some of the most impious, and unrighteous, and intemperate, and ignorant of men are among the most courageous; which proves that courage is very different from the other parts of virtue. I was surprised at his saying this at the time, and I am still more surprised now that I have discussed the matter with you. So I asked him whether by the brave he meant the confident. Yes, he replied, and the impetuous or goers. (You may remember, Protagoras, that this was your answer.)

He assented.

Well then, I said, tell us against what are the courageous ready to go—against the same dangers as the cowards?

No, he answered.

Then against something different?

Yes, he said.

Then do cowards go where there is safety, and the courageous where there is danger?

Yes, Socrates, so men say.

The courageous pursue dangers, but not in the belief that they are dangers. The courageous and the cowardly alike go to

Very true, I said. But I want to know against what do you say that the courageous are ready to go—against dangers, believing them to be dangers, or not against dangers?

No, said he; the former case has been proved by you in the previous argument to be impossible.

That, again, I replied, is quite true. And if this has been rightly proven, then no one goes to meet what he thinks to be dangers, since the want of self-control, which makes men rush into dangers, has been shown to be ignorance.

He assented.

Protagoras. SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. meet dangers, but they have different notions of what constitutes danger.

And yet the courageous man and the coward alike go to meet that about which they are confident; so that, in this point of view, the cowardly and the courageous go to meet the same things.

And yet, Socrates, said Protagoras, that to which the coward goes is the opposite of that to which the courageous goes; the one, for example, is ready to go to battle, and the other is not ready.

And is going to battle honourable or disgraceful? I said.

Honourable, he replied.

And if honourable, then already admitted by us to be good; for all honourable actions we have admitted to be good.

That is true; and to that opinion I shall always adhere.

360 True, I said. But which of the two are they who, as you say, are unwilling to go to war, which is a good and honourable thing?

The cowards, he replied.

And what is good and honourable, I said, is also pleasant?

It has certainly been acknowledged to be so, he replied.

And do the cowards knowingly refuse to go to the nobler, and pleasanter, and better?

The admission of that, he replied, would belie our former admissions.

But does not the courageous man also go to meet the better, and pleasanter, and nobler?

That must be admitted.

And the courageous man has no base fear or base confidence?

True, he replied.

And if not base, then honourable?

He admitted this.

And if honourable, then good?

Yes.

But the fear and confidence of the coward or foolhardy or madman, on the contrary, are base?

He assented.

And these base fears and confidences originate in ignorance and uninstructedness?

Protagoras. True, he said.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS. Then as to the motive from which the cowards act, do you call it cowardice or courage?

I should say cowardice, he replied.

And have they not been shown to be cowards through their ignorance of dangers?

Assuredly, he said.

And because of that ignorance they are cowards?

He assented.

And the reason why they are cowards is admitted by you to be cowardice?

He again assented.

Then the ignorance of what is and is not dangerous is cowardice?

He nodded assent.

But surely courage, I said, is opposed to cowardice?

Yes.

Then the wisdom which knows what are and are not dangers is opposed to the ignorance of them?

To that again he nodded assent.

And the ignorance of them is cowardice?

To that he very reluctantly nodded assent.

And the knowledge of that which is and is not dangerous is courage, and is opposed to the ignorance of these things?

At this point he would no longer nod assent, but was silent.

And why, I said, do you neither assent nor dissent, Protagoras?

Finish the argument by yourself, he said.

I only want to ask one more question, I said. I want to know whether you still think that there are men who are most ignorant and yet most courageous?

You seem to have a great ambition to make me answer, Socrates, and therefore I will gratify you, and say, that this appears to me to be impossible consistently with the argument.

Complimentary speeches which Socrates

My only object, I said, in continuing the discussion, has been the desire to ascertain the nature and relations of virtue; for if this were clear, I am very sure that the other controversy 361
which has been carried on at great length by both of us—you

affirming and I denying that virtue can be taught—would also become clear. The result of our discussion appears to me to be singular. For if the argument had a human voice, that voice would be heard laughing at us and saying: 'Protagoras and Socrates, you are strange beings; there are you, Socrates, who were saying that virtue cannot be taught, contradicting yourself now by your attempt to prove that all things are knowledge, including justice, and temperance, and courage,—which tends to show that virtue can certainly be taught; for if virtue were other than knowledge, as Protagoras attempted to prove, then clearly virtue cannot be taught; but if virtue is entirely knowledge, as you are seeking to show, then I cannot but suppose that virtue is capable of being taught. Protagoras, on the other hand, who started by saying that it might be taught, is now eager to prove it to be anything rather than knowledge; and if this is true, it must be quite incapable of being taught.' Now I, Protagoras, perceiving this terrible confusion of our ideas, have a great desire that they should be cleared up. And I should like to carry on the discussion until we ascertain what virtue is, and whether capable of being taught or not, lest haply Epimetheus should trip us up and deceive us in the argument, as he forgot us in the story; I prefer your Prometheus to your Epimetheus, for of him I make use, whenever I am busy about these questions, in Promethean care of my own life. And if you have no objection, as I said at first, I should like to have your help in the enquiry.

Protagoras.

SOCRATES, PROTAGORAS.

and Protagoras address to one another. They have somehow both of them changed their position in the course of the argument.

Protagoras replied: Socrates, I am not of a base nature, and I am the last man in the world to be envious. I cannot but applaud your energy and your conduct of an argument. As I have often said, I admire you above all men whom I know, and far above all men of your age; and I believe that you will become very eminent in philosophy. Let us come back to the subject at some future time; at present we had better turn to something else.

By all means, I said, if that is your wish; for I too ought long since to have kept the engagement of which I spoke before, and only tarried because I could not refuse the request of the noble Callias. So the conversation ended, and we went our way.

EUTHYDEMUS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Euthydemus, though apt to be regarded by us only as an elaborate jest, has also a very serious purpose. It may fairly claim to be the oldest treatise on logic; for that science originates in the misunderstandings which necessarily accompany the first efforts of speculation. Several of the fallacies which are satirized in it reappear in the Sophistici Elenchi of Aristotle and are retained at the end of our manuals of logic. But if the order of history were followed, they should be placed not at the end but at the beginning of them; for they belong to the age in which the human mind was first making the attempt to distinguish thought from sense, and to separate the universal from the particular or individual. How to put together words or ideas, how to escape ambiguities in the meaning of terms or in the structure of propositions, how to resist the fixed impression of an 'eternal being' or 'perpetual flux,' how to distinguish between words and things — these were problems not easy of solution in the infancy of philosophy. They presented the same kind of difficulty to the half-educated man which spelling or arithmetic do to the mind of a child. It was long before the new world of ideas which had been sought after with such passionate yearning was set in order and made ready for use. To us the fallacies which arise in the pre-Socratic philosophy are trivial and obsolete because we are no longer liable to fall into the errors which are expressed by them. The intellectual world has become better assured to us, and we are less likely to be imposed upon by illusions of words.

The logic of Aristotle is for the most part latent in the dialogues of Plato. The nature of definition is explained not by rules but by examples in the Charmides, Lysis, Laches, Protagoras, Meno, Euthyphro, Theaetetus, Gorgias, Republic; the nature of division is likewise illustrated by examples in the Sophist (p. 219 ff.) and

Euthydemus. INTRODUCTION.

Statesman (283 ff.); a scheme of categories is found in the Philebus (p. 66); the true doctrine of contradiction (436 ff.) is taught, and the fallacy of arguing in a circle (p. 505) is exposed in the Republic; the nature of synthesis and analysis is graphically described in the Phaedrus (p. 265); the nature of words is analysed in the Cratylus; the form of the syllogism is indicated in the genealogical trees of the Sophist and Statesman; a true doctrine of predication and an analysis of the sentence are given in the Sophist (p. 262); the different meanings of one and being are worked out in the Parmenides. Here we have most of the important elements of logic, not yet systematized or reduced to an art or science, but scattered up and down as they would naturally occur in ordinary discourse. They are of little or no use or significance to us; but because we have grown out of the need of them we should not therefore despise them. They are still interesting and instructive for the light which they shed on the history of the human mind.

There are indeed many old fallacies which linger among us, and new ones are constantly springing up. But they are not of the kind to which ancient logic can be usefully applied. The weapons of common sense, not the analytics of Aristotle, are needed for their overthrow. Nor is the use of the Aristotelian logic any longer natural to us. We no longer put arguments into the form of syllogisms like the schoolmen; the simple use of language has been, happily, restored to us. Neither do we discuss the nature of the proposition, nor extract hidden truths from the copula, nor dispute any longer about nominalism and realism. We do not confuse the form with the matter of knowledge, or invent laws of thought, or imagine that any single science furnishes a principle of reasoning to all the rest. Neither do we require categories or heads of argument to be invented for our use. Those who have no knowledge of logic, like some of our great physical philosophers, seem to be quite as good reasoners as those who have. Most of the ancient puzzles have been settled on the basis of usage and common sense; there is no need to reopen them. No science should raise problems or invent forms of thought which add nothing to knowledge and are of no use in assisting the acquisition of it. This seems to be the natural limit of logic and metaphysics; if they give us a more comprehensive or a more definite view of

the different spheres of knowledge they are to be studied; if not, not. The better part of ancient logic appears hardly in our own day to have a separate existence; it is absorbed in two other sciences: (1) rhetoric, if indeed this ancient art be not also fading away into literary criticism; (2) the science of language, under which all questions relating to words and propositions and the combinations of them may properly be included.

To continue dead or imaginary sciences, which make no signs of progress and have no definite sphere, tends to interfere with the prosecution of living ones. The study of them is apt to blind the judgment and to render men incapable of seeing the value of evidence, and even of appreciating the nature of truth. Nor should we allow the living science to become confused with the dead by an ambiguity of language. The term logic has two different meanings, an ancient and a modern one, and we vainly try to bridge the gulf between them. Many perplexities are avoided by keeping them apart. There might certainly be a new science of logic; it would not however be built up out of the fragments of the old, but would be distinct from them — relative to the state of knowledge which exists at the present time, and based chiefly on the methods of Modern Inductive philosophy. Such a science might have two legitimate fields: first, the refutation and explanation of false philosophies still hovering in the air as they appear from the point of view of later experience or are comprehended in the history of the human mind, as in a larger horizon: secondly, it might furnish new forms of thought more adequate to the expression of all the diversities and oppositions of knowledge which have grown up in these latter days; it might also suggest new methods of enquiry derived from the comparison of the sciences. Few will deny that the introduction of the words 'subject' and 'object' and the Hegelian reconciliation of opposites have been 'most gracious aids' to psychology, or that the methods of Bacon and Mill have shed a light far and wide on the realms of knowledge. These two great studies, the one destructive and corrective of error, the other conservative and constructive of truth, might be a first and second part of logic. Ancient logic would be the propaedeutic or gate of approach to logical science,— nothing more. But to pursue such speculations further, though not irrelevant, might lead us too far away from the argument of the dialogue.

Euthydemus.

INTRODUCTION.

The Euthydemus is, of all the Dialogues of Plato, that in which he approaches most nearly to the comic poet. The mirth is broader, the irony more sustained, the contrast between Socrates and the two Sophists, although veiled, penetrates deeper than in any other of his writings. Even Thrasymachus, in the Republic, is at last pacified, and becomes a friendly and interested auditor of the great discourse. But in the Euthydemus the mask is never dropped; the accustomed irony of Socrates continues to the end. . . . . .

ANALYSIS.

Socrates narrates to Crito a remarkable scene in which he has Steph
himself taken part, and in which the two brothers, Dionysodorus 271
and Euthydemus, are the chief performers. They are natives of Chios, who had settled at Thurii, but were driven out, and in former days had been known at Athens as professors of rhetoric and of the art of fighting in armour. To this they have now added a new accomplishment — the art of Eristic, or fighting with words, 272
which they are likewise willing to teach 'for a consideration.' But they can also teach virtue in a very short time and in the very best manner. Socrates, who is always on the look-out for teachers of virtue, is interested in the youth Cleinias, the grandson of the great Alcibiades, and is desirous that he should have the benefit of their instructions. He is ready to fall down and worship them; although the greatness of their professions does arouse in his mind a temporary incredulity.

A circle gathers round them, in the midst of which are Socrates, the two brothers, the youth Cleinias, who is watched by the eager eyes of his lover Ctesippus, and others. The performance begins; 275
and such a performance as might well seem to require an invocation of Memory and the Muses. It is agreed that the brothers shall question Cleinias. 'Cleinias,' says Euthydemus, 'who learn, the wise or the unwise?' 'The wise,' is the reply; given with blushing and hesitation. 'And yet when you learned you did not 276
know and were not wise.' Then Dionysodorus takes up the ball: 'Who are they who learn dictation of the grammar-master; the 277
wise boys or the foolish boys?' 'The wise.' 'Then, after all, the wise learn.' 'And do they learn,' said Euthydemus, 'what they know or what they do not know?' 'The latter.' 'And dictation is a dictation of letters?' 'Yes.' 'And you know letters?' 'Yes.' 'Then you learn what you know.' 'But,' retorts Dionyso-

dorus, 'is not learning acquiring knowledge?' 'Yes.' 'And you acquire that which you have not got already?' 'Yes.' 'Then you learn that which you do not know.'

Socrates is afraid that the youth Cleinias may be discouraged at these repeated overthrows. He therefore explains to him the nature of the process to which he is being subjected. The two
278 strangers are not serious; there are jests at the mysteries which precede the enthronement, and he is being initiated into the mysteries of the sophistical ritual. This is all a sort of horse-play, which is now ended. The exhortation to virtue will follow, and Socrates himself (if the wise men will not laugh at him) is desirous of showing the way in which such an exhortation should be carried on, according to his own poor notion. He proceeds to question Cleinias. The result of the investigation may be summed up as follows:—
279 All men desire good; and good means the possession of goods, such as wealth, health, beauty, birth, power, honour; not forgetting the virtues and wisdom. And yet in this enumeration the greatest good of all is omitted. What is that? Good fortune. But what need is there of good fortune when we have wisdom already: — in every art and business are not the wise also the fortunate?
280 This is admitted. And again, the possession of goods is not enough; there must also be a right use of them which can only be
281 given by knowledge: in themselves they are neither good nor evil — knowledge and wisdom are the only good, and ignorance and
282 folly the only evil. The conclusion is that we must get 'wisdom.' But can wisdom be taught? 'Yes,' says Cleinias. The ingenuousness of the youth delights Socrates, who is at once relieved from the necessity of discussing one of his great puzzles. 'Since wisdom is the only good, he must become a philosopher, or lover
283 of wisdom.' 'That I will,' says Cleinias.

After Socrates has given this specimen of his own mode of instruction, the two brothers recommence their exhortation to virtue, which is of quite another sort.

'You want Cleinias to be wise?' 'Yes.' 'And he is not wise yet?' 'No.' 'Then you want him to be what he is not, and not to be what he is? — not to be — that is, to perish. Pretty lovers and friends you must all be!'

284 Here Ctesippus, the lover of Cleinias, interposes in great excitement, thinking that he will teach the two Sophists a lesson of

good manners. But he is quickly entangled in the meshes of their sophistry; and as a storm seems to be gathering Socrates pacifies 285
him with a joke, and Ctesippus then says that he is not reviling the two Sophists, he is only contradicting them. 'But,' says Dionysodorus, 'there is no such thing as contradiction. When you and I describe the same thing, or you describe one thing and 286
I describe another, how can there be a contradiction?' Ctesippus is unable to reply.

Socrates has already heard of the denial of contradiction, and would like to be informed by the great master of the art, 'What is the meaning of this paradox? Is there no such thing as error, 287
ignorance, falsehood? Then what are they professing to teach?' The two Sophists complain that Socrates is ready to answer what they said a year ago, but is 'non-plussed' at what they are saying now. 'What does the word "non-plussed" mean?' Socrates is informed, in reply, that words are lifeless things, and lifeless things have no sense or meaning. Ctesippus again breaks out, and again 288
has to be pacified by Socrates, who renews the conversation with Cleinias. The two Sophists are like Proteus in the variety of their transformations, and he, like Menelaus in the Odyssey (iv. 306 ff.), hopes to restore them to their natural form.

He had arrived at the conclusion that Cleinias must become a philosopher. And philosophy is the possession of knowledge; 289
and knowledge must be of a kind which is profitable and may be used. What knowledge is there which has such a nature? Not the knowledge which is required in any particular art; nor again the art of the composer of speeches, who knows how to write them, but cannot speak them, although he too must be admitted to 290
be a kind of enchanter of wild animals. Neither is the knowledge which we are seeking the knowledge of the general. For the general makes over his prey to the statesman, as the huntsman does to the cook, or the taker of quails to the keeper of quails; he has not the use of that which he acquires. The two enquirers, 291
Cleinias and Socrates, are described as wandering about in a wilderness, vainly searching after the art of life and happiness. At last they fix upon the kingly art, as having the desired sort of knowledge. But the kingly art only gives men those goods 292
which are neither good nor evil: and if we say further that it makes us wise, in what does it make us wise? Not in special arts,

such as cobbling or carpentering, but only in itself: or say again that it makes us good, there is no answer to the question, 'good in what?' At length in despair Cleinias and Socrates turn to the
293 'Dioscuri' and request their aid.

Euthydemus argues that Socrates knows something; and as he cannot know and not know, he cannot know some things and not
294 know others, and therefore he knows all things: he and Dionysodorus and all other men know all things. 'Do they know shoemaking, &c.?' 'Yes.' The sceptical Ctesippus would like to have some evidence of this extraordinary statement: he will believe if Euthydemus will tell him how many teeth Dionysodorus has, and if Dionysodorus will give him a like piece of information about
295 Euthydemus. Even Socrates is incredulous, and indulges in a little raillery at the expense of the brothers. But he restrains
296 himself, remembering that if the men who are to be his teachers think him stupid they will take no pains with him. Another fallacy is produced which turns on the absoluteness of the verb 'to know.' And here Dionysodorus is caught 'napping,' and is induced by
297 Socrates to confess that 'he does not know the good to be unjust.' Socrates appeals to his brother Euthydemus; at the same time he acknowledges that he cannot, like Heracles, fight against a Hydra, and even Heracles, on the approach of a second monster, called upon his nephew Iolaus to help. Dionysodorus rejoins that Iolaus was no more the nephew of Heracles than of Socrates.
298 For a nephew is a nephew, and a brother is a brother, and a father is a father, not of one man only, but of all; nor of men only, but of dogs and sea-monsters. Ctesippus makes merry with the
299 consequences which follow: 'Much good has your father got out of the wisdom of his puppies.'

'But,' says Euthydemus, unabashed, 'nobody wants much good.' Medicine is a good, arms are a good, money is a good, and yet there may be too much of them in wrong places. 'No,' says Ctesippus, 'there cannot be too much gold.' 'And would you be happy if you had three talents of gold in your belly, a talent in your pate, and a stater in either eye?' Ctesippus, imitating the new wisdom, replies, 'And do not the Scythians reckon those to be the happiest of men who have their skulls gilded and see the
300 inside of them?' 'Do you see,' retorts Euthydemus, what has the quality of vision or what has not the quality of vision?' 'What

has the quality of vision.' 'And you see our garments?' 'Yes.' 'Then our garments have the quality of vision.' A similar play of words follows, which is successfully retorted by Ctesippus, to the great delight of Cleinias, who is rebuked by Socrates for laughing at such solemn and beautiful things.

'But are there any beautiful things? And if there are such, are 301
they the same or not the same as absolute beauty?' Socrates replies that they are not the same, but each of them has some beauty present with it. 'And are you an ox because you have an ox present with you?' After a few more amphiboliae, 302
in which Socrates, like Ctesippus, in self-defence borrows the weapons of the brothers, they both confess that the two heroes are invincible; and the scene concludes with a grand chorus of shouting and laughing, and a panegyrical oration from 303
Socrates:—

First, he praises the indifference of Dionysodorus and Euthydemus to public opinion; for most persons would rather be refuted by such arguments than use them in the refutation of others. Secondly, he remarks upon their impartiality; for they stop their own mouths, as well as those of other people. Thirdly, he notes 304
their liberality, which makes them give away their secret to all the world: they should be more reserved, and let no one be present at this exhibition who does not pay them a handsome fee; or better still they might practise on one another only. He concludes with a respectful request that they will receive him and Cleinias among their disciples.

Crito tells Socrates that he has heard one of the audience criti-
cise severely this wisdom,—not sparing Socrates himself for coun- 305
tenancing such an exhibition. Socrates asks what manner of man was this censorious critic. 'Not an orator, but a great composer of speeches.' Socrates understands that he is an amphibious animal, half philosopher, half politician; one of a class who have the highest opinion of themselves and a spite against philosophers, whom they imagine to be their rivals. They are a class who are very likely to get mauled by Euthydemus and his friends, and have a great notion of their own wisdom; for they imagine themselves to have all the advantages and none of the drawbacks both of politics and of philosophy. They do not understand the principles 306
of combination, and hence are ignorant that the union of two good

things which have different ends produces a compound inferior to either of them taken separately.

Crito is anxious about the education of his children, one of whom is growing up. The description of Dionysodorus and Euthydemus
307 suggests to him the reflection that the professors of education are strange beings. Socrates consoles him with the remark that the good in all professions are few, and recommends that 'he and his house' should continue to serve philosophy, and not mind about its professors.

There is a stage in the history of philosophy in which the old is dying out, and the new has not yet come into full life. Great philosophies like the Eleatic or Heraclitean, which have enlarged the boundaries of the human mind, begin to pass away in words. They subsist only as forms which have rooted themselves in language — as troublesome elements of thought which cannot be either used or explained away. The same absoluteness which was once attributed to abstractions is now attached to the words which are the signs of them. The philosophy which in the first and second generation was a great and inspiring effort of reflection, in the third becomes sophistical, verbal, eristic.

It is this stage of philosophy which Plato satirizes in the Euthydemus. The fallacies which are noted by him appear trifling to us now, but they were not trifling in the age before logic, in the decline of the earlier Greek philosophies, at a time when language was first beginning to perplex human thought. Besides he is caricaturing them; they probably received more subtle forms at the hands of those who seriously maintained them. They are patent to us in Plato, and we are inclined to wonder how any one could ever have been deceived by them; but we must remember also that there was a time when the human mind was only with great difficulty disentangled from such fallacies.

To appreciate fully the drift of the Euthydemus, we should imagine a mental state in which not individuals only, but whole schools during more than one generation, were animated by the desire to exclude the conception of rest, and therefore the very word 'this' (Theaet. 183 C) from language; in which the ideas of space, time, matter, motion, were proved to be contradictory and imaginary; in which the nature of qualitative change was a puzzle,

Euthydemus. INTRODUCTION.

and even differences of degree, when applied to abstract notions, were not understood; in which there was no analysis of grammar, and mere puns or plays of words received serious attention; in which contradiction itself was denied, and, on the one hand, every predicate was affirmed to be true of every subject, and on the other, it was held that no predicate was true of any subject, and that nothing was, or was known, or could be spoken. Let us imagine disputes carried on with religious earnestness and more than scholastic subtlety, in which the catchwords of philosophy are completely detached from their context. (Cp. Theaet. 180.) To such disputes the humour, whether of Plato in the ancient, or of Pope and Swift in the modern world, is the natural enemy. Nor must we forget that in modern times also there is no fallacy so gross, no trick of language so transparent, no abstraction so barren and unmeaning, no form of thought so contradictory to experience, which has not been found to satisfy the minds of philosophical enquirers at a certain stage, or when regarded from a certain point of view only. The peculiarity of the fallacies of our own age is that we live within them, and are therefore generally unconscious of them.

Aristotle has analysed several of the same fallacies in his book 'De Sophisticis Elenchis,' which Plato, with equal command of their true nature, has preferred to bring to the test of ridicule. At first we are only struck with the broad humour of this 'reductio ad absurdum:' gradually we perceive that some important questions begin to emerge. Here, as everywhere else, Plato is making war against the philosophers who put words in the place of things, who tear arguments to tatters, who deny predication, and thus make knowledge impossible; to whom ideas and objects of sense have no fixedness, but are in a state of perpetual oscillation and transition. Two great truths seem to be indirectly taught through these fallacies: (1) The uncertainty of language, which allows the same words to be used in different meanings, or with different degrees of meaning: (2) The necessary limitation or relative nature of all phenomena. Plato is aware that his own doctrine of ideas (p. 301 A), as well as the Eleatic Being and Not-being, alike admit of being regarded as verbal fallacies (p. 284 A, B). The sophism advanced in the Meno (p. 80 D), that you cannot enquire either into what you know or do not know,' is lightly

touched upon at the commencement of the Dialogue (pp. 275, 276); the thesis of Protagoras, that everything is true to him to whom it seems to be true, is satirized at p. 286. In contrast with these fallacies is maintained the Socratic doctrine that happiness is gained by knowledge. The grammatical puzzles with which the Dialogue concludes probably contain allusions to tricks of language which may have been practised by the disciples of Prodicus or Antisthenes. They would have had more point, if we were acquainted with the writings against which Plato's humour is directed. Most of the jests appear to have a serious meaning; but we have lost the clue to some of them, and cannot determine whether, as in the Cratylus, Plato has or has not mixed up purely unmeaning fun with his satire.

The two discourses of Socrates may be contrasted in several respects with the exhibition of the Sophists: (1) In their perfect relevancy to the subject of discussion, whereas the Sophistical discourses are wholly irrelevant: (2) In their enquiring, sympathetic tone, which encourages the youth, instead of 'knocking him down,' after the manner of the two Sophists: (3) In the absence of any definite conclusion — for while Socrates and the youth are agreed that philosophy is to be studied, they are not able to arrive at any certain result about the art which is to teach it. This is a question which will hereafter be answered in the Republic; as the conception of the kingly art (291, 292) is more fully developed in the Politicus, and the caricature of rhetoric (290) in the Gorgias.

The characters of the Dialogue are easily intelligible. There is Socrates once more in the character of an old man; and his equal in years, Crito, the father of Critobulus, like Lysimachus in the Laches, his fellow demesman (Apol. 33 D), to whom the scene is narrated, and who once or twice interrupts with a remark after the manner of the interlocutor in the Phaedo, and adds his commentary at the end; Socrates makes a playful allusion to his money-getting habits. There is the youth Cleinias, the grandson of Alcibiades, who may be compared with Lysis, Charmides, Menexenus, and other ingenuous youths out of whose mouths Socrates draws his own lessons, and to whom he always seems to stand in a kindly and sympathetic relation. Crito will not believe that Socrates has not improved or perhaps invented the answers of Cleinias (cp. Charm. 161 foll.; Phaedr. 275 B). The name of the

Euthydemus. INTRODUCTION.

grandson of Alcibiades, who is described as long dead, τοῦ παλαιοῦ, and who died at the age of forty-four, in the year 404 B. C., suggests not only that the intended scene of the Euthydemus could not have been earlier than 404, but that as a fact this Dialogue could not have been composed before 390 at the soonest. Ctesippus, who is the lover of Cleinias, has been already introduced to us in the Lysis, and seems there too to deserve the character which is here given him, of a somewhat uproarious young man. But the chief study of all is the picture of the two brothers, who are unapproachable in their effrontery, equally careless of what they say to others and of what is said to them, and never at a loss. They are 'Arcades ambo et cantare pares et respondere parati.' Some superior degree of wit or subtlety is attributed to Euthydemus, who sees the trap in which Socrates catches Dionysodorus (296 A).

The epilogue or conclusion of the Dialogue has been criticised as inconsistent with the general scheme. Such a criticism is like similar criticisms on Shakespeare, and proceeds upon a narrow notion of the variety which the Dialogue, like the drama, seems to admit. Plato in the abundance of his dramatic power has chosen to write a play upon a play, just as he often gives us an argument within an argument. At the same time he takes the opportunity of assailing another class of persons who are as alien from the spirit of philosophy as Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. The Eclectic, the Syncretist, the Doctrinaire, have been apt to have a bad name both in ancient and modern times. The persons whom Plato ridicules in the epilogue to the Euthydemus are of this class. They occupy a border-ground between philosophy and politics; they keep out of the dangers of politics, and at the same time use philosophy as a means of serving their own interests. Plato quaintly describes them as making two good things, philosophy and politics, a little worse by perverting the objects of both. Men like Antiphon or Lysias would be types of the class. Out of a regard to the respectabilities of life, they are disposed to censure the interest which Socrates takes in the exhibition of the two brothers. They do not understand, any more than Crito, that he is pursuing his vocation of detecting the follies of mankind, which he finds 'not unpleasant.' (Cp. Apol. 23 B, 33 B.)

Education is the common subject of all Plato's earlier Dialogues.

The concluding remark of Crito, that he has a difficulty in educating his two sons, and the advice of Socrates to him that he should not give up philosophy because he has no faith in philosophers, seems to be a preparation for the more peremptory declaration of the Meno that 'Virtue cannot be taught because there are no teachers.'

The reasons for placing the Euthydemus early in the series are: (1) the similarity in plan and style to the Protagoras, Charmides, and Lysis; — the relation of Socrates to the Sophists is still that of humorous antagonism, not, as in the later Dialogues of Plato, of embittered hatred; and the places and persons have a considerable family likeness; (2) the Euthydemus belongs to the Socratic period in which Socrates is represented as willing to learn, but unable to teach; and in the spirit of Xenophon's Memorabilia, philosophy is defined as 'the knowledge which will make us happy;' (3) we seem to have passed the stage arrived at in the Protagoras, for Socrates is no longer discussing whether virtue can be taught — from this question he is relieved by the ingenuous declaration of the youth Cleinias; and (4) not yet to have reached the point at which he asserts 'that there are no teachers.' Such grounds are precarious, as arguments from style and plan are apt to be (*ὀλισθηρότατον τὸ γένος*). But no arguments equally strong can be urged in favour of assigning to the Euthydemus any other position in the series.

EUTHYDEMUS.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES, *who is the narrator of the Dialogue.*	EUTHYDEMUS.
CRITO.	DIONYSODORUS.
CLEINIAS.	CTESIPPUS.

SCENE:—The Lyceum.

eph. 71 CRITO, SOCRATES.

Crito. WHO was the person, Socrates, with whom you were talking yesterday at the Lyceum? There was such a crowd around you that I could not get within hearing, but I caught a sight of him over their heads, and I made out, as I thought, that he was a stranger with whom you were talking: who was he?

Socrates. There were two, Crito; which of them do you mean?

Cri. The one whom I mean was seated second from you on the right-hand side. In the middle was Cleinias the young son of Axiochus, who has wonderfully grown; he is only about the age of my own Critobulus, but he is much forwarder and very good-looking: the other is thin and looks younger than he is.

Soc. He whom you mean, Crito, is Euthydemus; and on my left hand there was his brother Dionysodorus, who also took part in the conversation.

Cri. [1] Neither of them are known to me, Socrates; they are a new importation of Sophists, as I should imagine. Of what country are they, and what is their line of wisdom?

[1] Or, according to the arrangement of Stallbaum:—
Cri. Neither of them are known to me.
Soc. They are a new importation of Sophists as I should imagine.
Cri. Of what country, &c.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CRITO.

The various accomplishments of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus.

Soc. As to their origin, I believe that they are natives of this part of the world, and have migrated from Chios to Thurii; they were driven out of Thurii, and have been living for many years past in these regions. As to their wisdom, about which you ask, Crito, they are wonderful—consummate! I never knew what the true pancratiast was before; they are simply made up of fighting, not like the two Acarnanian brothers who fight with their bodies only, but this pair of heroes, besides being perfect in the use of their bodies, are invincible in every sort of warfare; for they 2
are capital at fighting in armour, and will teach the art to any one who pays them; and also they are most skilful in legal warfare; they will plead themselves and teach others to speak and to compose speeches which will have an effect upon the courts. And this was only the beginning of their wisdom, but they have at last carried out the pancratiastic art to the very end, and have mastered the only mode of fighting which had been hitherto neglected by them; and now no one dares even to stand up against them: such is their skill in the war of words, that they can refute any proposition whether true or false. Now I am thinking, Crito, of placing myself in their hands; for they say that in a short time they can impart their skill to any one.

Cri. But, Socrates, are you not too old? there may be reason to fear that.

Socrates thinks that he is not too old to become their pupil.

Soc. Certainly not, Crito; as I will prove to you, for I have the consolation of knowing that they began this art of disputation which I covet, quite, as I may say, in old age; last year, or the year before, they had none of their new wisdom. I am only apprehensive lest I should bring the two strangers into disrepute, as I have done Connus the son of Metrobius, the harp-player, who is still my music-master; for when the boys who go to him see me going with them, they laugh at me and call him grandpapa's master. Now I should not like the strangers to experience similar treatment; the fear of ridicule may make them unwilling to receive me; and therefore, Crito, I shall try and persuade some old men to accompany me to them, as I persuaded them to go with me to Connus, and I hope that you will make one: and perhaps we had better take your sons as a bait; they will want to

have them as pupils, and for the sake of them will be willing to receive us.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CRITO, EUTHYDEMUS.

Cri. I see no objection, Socrates, if you like; but first I wish that you would give me a description of their wisdom, that I may know beforehand what we are going to learn.

He describes the scene of which he had been a witness.

Soc. In less than no time you shall hear; for I cannot say that I did not attend—I paid great attention to them, and I remember and will endeavour to repeat the whole story. Providentially I was sitting alone in the dressing-room of the Lyceum where you saw me, and was about to depart; when I was getting up I recognized the familiar divine sign: so I sat down again, and in a little while the two brothers 273 Euthydemus and Dionysodorus came in, and several others with them, whom I believe to be their disciples, and they walked about in the covered court; they had not taken more than two or three turns when Cleinias entered, who, as you truly say, is very much improved: he was followed by a host of lovers, one of whom was Ctesippus the Paeanian, a well-bred youth, but also having the wildness of youth. Cleinias saw me from the entrance as I was sitting alone, and at once came and sat down on the right hand of me, as you describe; and Dionysodorus and Euthydemus, when they saw him, at first stopped and talked with one another, now and then glancing at us, for I particularly watched them; and then Euthydemus came and sat down by the youth, and the other by me on the left hand; the rest anywhere. I saluted the brothers, whom I had not seen for a long time; and then I said to Cleinias: Here are two wise men, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, Cleinias, wise not in a small but in a large way of wisdom, for they know all about war,—all that a good general ought to know about the array and command of an army, and the whole art of fighting in armour: and they know about law too, and can teach a man how to use the weapons of the courts when he is injured.

The youth Cleinias and his lover Ctesippus.

They heard me say this, but only despised me. I observed that they looked at one another, and both of them laughed; and then Euthydemus said: Those, Socrates, are matters which we no longer pursue seriously; to us they are secondary occupations.

Indeed, I said, if such occupations are regarded by you as

Euthydemus. secondary, what must the principal one be; tell me, I beseech you, what that noble study is?

SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS.

The teaching of virtue, Socrates, he replied, is our principal occupation; and we believe that we can impart it better and quicker than any man.

The two Sophists have given up teaching the arts; they are now engaged in teaching virtue.

My God! I said, and where did you learn that? I always imagined, as I was saying just now, your chief accomplishment to be the art of fighting in armour; and I used to say as much of you, for I remember that you professed this when you were here before. But now if you really have the other knowledge, O forgive me: I address you as I would superior beings, and ask you to pardon the impiety of my former expressions. But are you quite sure about this, Dionysodorus 2
and Euthydemus? the promise is so vast, that a feeling of incredulity steals over me.

You may take our word, Socrates, for the fact.

Then I think you happier in having such a treasure than the great king is in the possession of his kingdom. And please to tell me whether you intend to exhibit your wisdom; or what will you do?

That is why we have come hither, Socrates; and our purpose is not only to exhibit, but also to teach any one who likes to learn.

But I can promise you, I said, that every unvirtuous person will want to learn. I shall be the first; and there is the youth Cleinias, and Ctesippus: and here are several others, I said, pointing to the lovers of Cleinias, who were beginning to gather round us. Now Ctesippus was sitting at some distance from Cleinias; and when Euthydemus leaned forward in talking with me, he was prevented from seeing Cleinias, who was between us; and so, partly because he wanted to look at his love, and also because he was interested, he jumped up and stood opposite to us: and all the other admirers of Cleinias, as well as the disciples of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, followed his example. And these were the persons whom I showed to Euthydemus, telling him that they were all eager to learn: to which Ctesippus and all of them with one voice vehemently assented, and bid him exhibit the power of his wisdom. Then I said: O Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, I earnestly request you to do myself and the

company the favour to exhibit. There may be some trouble in giving the whole exhibition; but tell me one thing,—can you make a good man of him only who is already convinced that he ought to learn of you, or of him also who is not convinced, either because he imagines that virtue is a thing which cannot be taught at all, or that you are not the teachers of it? Has your art power to persuade him, who is of the latter temper of mind, that virtue can be taught; and that you are the men from whom he will best learn it?

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, EUTHYDEMUS.

Can they teach virtue to those only who are willing or to those also who are unwilling to learn?

Certainly, Socrates, said Dionysodorus; our art will do both.

And you and your brother, Dionysodorus, I said, of all men who are now living are the most likely to stimulate him to philosophy and to the study of virtue?

275 Yes, Socrates, I rather think that we are.

Then I wish that you would be so good as to defer the other part of the exhibition, and only try to persuade the youth whom you see here that he ought to be a philosopher and study virtue. Exhibit that, and you will confer a great favour on me and on every one present; for the fact is I and all of us are extremely anxious that he should become truly good. His name is Cleinias, and he is the son of Axiochus, and grandson of the old Alcibiades, cousin of the Alcibiades that now is. He is quite young, and we are naturally afraid that some one may get the start of us, and turn his mind in a wrong direction, and he may be ruined. Your visit, therefore, is most happily timed; and I hope that you will make a trial of the young man, and converse with him in our presence, if you have no objection.

These were pretty nearly the expressions which I used; and Euthydemus, in a manly and at the same time encouraging tone, replied: There can be no objection, Socrates, if the young man is only willing to answer questions.

Euthydemus begins in a lofty and cheerful tone.

He is quite accustomed to do so, I replied; for his friends often come and ask him questions and argue with him; and therefore he is quite at home in answering.

What followed, Crito, how can I rightly narrate? For not slight is the task of rehearsing infinite wisdom, and therefore, like the poets, I ought to commence my relation with an invocation to Memory and the Muses. Now Euthydemus, if

The scene which followed was beyond description.

Euthydemus. I remember rightly, began nearly as follows: O Cleinias, are those who learn the wise or the ignorant?

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, CLEINIAS, EUTHYDEMUS.

The youth, overpowered by the question, blushed, and in his perplexity looked at me for help; and I, knowing that he was disconcerted, said: Take courage, Cleinias, and answer like a man whichever you think; for my belief is that you will derive the greatest benefit from their questions.

Whichever he answers, said Dionysodorus, leaning forward so as to catch my ear, his face beaming with laughter, I prophesy that he will be refuted, Socrates.

The wise only learn:

While he was speaking to me, Cleinias gave his answer: and therefore I had no time to warn him of the predicament in which he was placed, and he answered that those who 276
learned were the wise.

Euthydemus proceeded: There are some whom you would call teachers, are there not?

The boy assented.

And they are the teachers of those who learn—the grammar-master and the lyre-master used to teach you and other boys; and you were the learners?

Yes.

and yet those who learn are unlearned;

And when you were learners you did not as yet know the things which you were learning?

No, he said.

And were you wise then?

No, indeed, he said.

But if you were not wise you were unlearned?

Certainly.

You then, learning what you did not know, were unlearned when you were learning?

The youth nodded assent.

and therefore the unlearned learn and not the wise.

Then the unlearned learn [1], and not the wise, Cleinias, as you imagine.

At these words the followers of Euthydemus, of whom I spoke, like a chorus at the bidding of their director, laughed and cheered. Then, before the youth had time to recover his breath, Dionysodorus cleverly took him in hand, and said: Yes, Cleinias; and when the grammar-master dictated

[1] Omitting *σοφοί*.

anything to you, were they the wise boys or the unlearned who learned the dictation?

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, CLEINIAS, EUTHYDEMUS.

The wise, replied Cleinias.

Then after all the wise are the learners and not the unlearned; and your last answer to Euthydemus was wrong.

Then once more the admirers of the two heroes, in an ecstasy at their wisdom, gave vent to another peal of laughter, while the rest of us were silent and amazed. Euthydemus, observing this, determined to persevere with the youth; and in order to heighten the effect went on asking another similar question, which might be compared to the double turn of an expert dancer. Do those, said he, who learn, learn what they know, or what they do not know?

A similar trick of argument.

Again Dionysodorus whispered to me: That, Socrates, is just another of the same sort.

Good heavens, I said; and your last question was so good!

Like all our other questions, Socrates, he replied—inevitable.

I see the reason, I said, why you are in such reputation among your disciples.

The teacher dictates to his pupils that which they do not know: and yet he dictates letters which they know.

Meanwhile Cleinias had answered Euthydemus that those who learned learn what they do not know; and he put him through a series of questions the same as before.

Do you not know letters?

He assented.

All letters?

Yes.

But when the teacher dictates to you, does he not dictate letters?

To this also he assented.

Then if you know all letters, he dictates that which you know?

This again was admitted by him.

Then, said the other, you do not learn that which he dictates; but he only who does not know letters learns?

Nay, said Cleinias; but I do learn.

Then, said he, you learn what you know, if you know all the letters?

He admitted that.

Then, he said, you were wrong in your answer.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, CLEINIAS, EUTHYDEMUS.

The word was hardly out of his mouth when Dionysodorus took up the argument, like a ball which he caught, and had another throw at the youth. Cleinias, he said, Euthydemus is deceiving you. For tell me now, is not learning acquiring knowledge of that which one learns?

Cleinias assented.

The trick reversed.

And knowing is having knowledge at the time?

He agreed.

And not knowing is not having knowledge at the time?

He admitted that.

And are those who acquire those who have or have not a thing?

Those who have not.

And have you not admitted that those who do not know are of the number of those who have not?

He nodded assent.

Then those who learn are of the class of those who acquire, and not of those who have?

He agreed.

Then, Cleinias, he said, those who do not know learn, and not those who know.

Socrates explains to Cleinias the sophistical mode of procedure.

Euthydemus was proceeding to give the youth a third fall; but I knew that he was in deep water, and therefore, as I wanted to give him a respite lest he should be disheartened, I said to him consolingly: You must not be surprised, Cleinias, at the singularity of their mode of speech: this I say because you may not understand what the two strangers are doing with you; they are only initiating you after the manner of the Corybantes in the mysteries; and this answers to the enthronement, which, if you have ever been initiated, is, as you will know, accompanied by dancing and sport; and now they are just prancing and dancing about you, and will next proceed to initiate you; imagine then that you have gone through the first part of the sophistical ritual, which, as Prodicus says, begins with initiation into the correct use of terms. The two foreign gentlemen, perceiving that you did not know, wanted to explain to you that the word 'to learn' has two meanings, and is used, first, in the sense of acquiring 2
knowledge of some matter of which you previously have no knowledge, and also, when you have the knowledge, in the

sense of reviewing this matter, whether something done or spoken by the light of this newly-acquired knowledge; the latter is generally called 'knowing' rather than 'learning,' but the word 'learning' is also used; and you did not see, as they explained to you, that the term is employed of two opposite sorts of men, of those who know, and of those who do not know. There was a similar trick in the second question, when they asked you whether men learn what they know or what they do not know. These parts of learning are not serious, and therefore I say that the gentlemen are not serious, but are only playing with you. For if a man had all that sort of knowledge that ever was, he would not be at all the wiser; he would only be able to play with men, tripping them up and oversetting them with distinctions of words. He would be like a person who pulls away a stool from some one when he is about to sit down, and then laughs and makes merry at the sight of his friend overturned and laid on his back. And you must regard all that has hitherto passed between you and them as merely play. But in what is to follow I am certain that they will exhibit to you their serious purpose, and keep their promise (I will show them how); for they promised to give me a sample of the hortatory philosophy, but I suppose that they wanted to have a game with you first. And now, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, I think that we have had enough of this. Will you let me see you explaining to the young man how he is to apply himself to the study of virtue and wisdom? And I will first show you what I conceive to be the nature of the task, and what sort of a discourse I desire to hear; and if I do this in a very inartistic and ridiculous manner, do not laugh at me, for I only venture to improvise before you because I am eager to hear your wisdom: and I must therefore ask you and your disciples to refrain from laughing. And now, O son of Axiochus, let me put a question to you: Do not all men desire happiness? And yet, perhaps, this is one of those ridiculous questions which I am afraid to ask, and which ought not to be asked by a sensible man: for what human being is there who does not desire happiness?

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS.

The two Sophists were having a game of play with him.

79 There is no one, said Cleinias, who does not.

Well, then, I said, since we all of us desire happiness, how

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS.

can we be happy?—that is the next question. Shall we not be happy if we have many good things? And this, perhaps, is even a more simple question than the first, for there can be no doubt of the answer.

Happiness is the possession of many good things:

He assented.

And what things do we esteem good? No solemn sage is required to tell us this, which may be easily answered; for every one will say that wealth is a good.

Certainly, he said.

and good things are wealth, health, beauty, good birth, power, honour, and all the virtues, justice, temperance, courage, wisdom.

And are not health and beauty goods, and other personal gifts?

He agreed.

Can there be any doubt that good birth, and power, and honours in one's own land, are goods?

He assented.

And what other goods are there? I said. What do you say of temperance, justice, courage: do you not verily and indeed think, Cleinias, that we shall be more right in ranking them as goods than in not ranking them as goods? For a dispute might possibly arise about this. What then do you say?

They are goods, said Cleinias.

Very well, I said; and where in the company shall we find a place for wisdom—among the goods or not?

Among the goods.

And now, I said, think whether we have left out any considerable goods.

I do not think that we have, said Cleinias.

Upon recollection, I said, indeed I am afraid that we have left out the greatest of them all.

What is that? he asked.

Fortune, Cleinias, I replied; which all, even the most foolish, admit to be the greatest of goods.

True, he said.

But we have omitted, or rather not omitted, good-fortune; for it is already contained in wisdom.

On second thoughts, I added, how narrowly, O son of Axiochus, have you and I escaped making a laughing-stock of ourselves to the strangers.

Why do you say so?

Why, because we have already spoken of good-fortune, and are but repeating ourselves.

What do you mean?

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS.

I mean that there is something ridiculous in again putting forward good-fortune, which has a place in the list already, and saying the same thing twice over.

He asked what was the meaning of this, and I replied: Surely wisdom is good-fortune; even a child may know that.

The fortunate are only the wise under another name.

The simple-minded youth was amazed; and, observing his surprise, I said to him: Do you not know, Cleinias, that flute-players are most fortunate and successful in performing on the flute?

He assented.

And are not the scribes most fortunate in writing and reading letters?

Certainly.

Amid the dangers of the sea, again, are any more fortunate on the whole than wise pilots?

None, certainly.

And if you were engaged in war, in whose company would you rather take the risk—in company with a wise general, or with a foolish one?

With a wise one.

And if you were ill, whom would you rather have as a companion in a dangerous illness—a wise physician, or an ignorant one?

A wise one.

You think, I said, that to act with a wise man is more fortunate than to act with an ignorant one?

He assented.

And we are deemed fortunate when we are possessed of many good things. But we must use them as well as have them.

280 Then wisdom always makes men fortunate: for by wisdom no man would ever err, and therefore he must act rightly and succeed, or his wisdom would be wisdom no longer.

We contrived at last, somehow or other, to agree in a general conclusion, that he who had wisdom had no need of fortune. I then recalled to his mind the previous state of the question. You remember, I said, our making the admission that we should be happy and fortunate if many good things were present with us?

He assented.

And should we be happy by reason of the presence of good things, if they profited us not, or if they profited us?

If they profited us, he said.

Euthydemus. And would they profit us, if we only had them and did not use them? For example, if we had a great deal of food and did not eat, or a great deal of drink and did not drink, should we be profited?

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS.

Certainly not, he said.

Or would an artisan, who had all the implements necessary for his work, and did not use them, be any the better for the possession of them? For example, would a carpenter be any the better for having all his tools and plenty of wood, if he never worked?

Certainly not, he said.

And if a person had wealth and all the goods of which we were just now speaking, and did not use them, would he be happy because he possessed them?

No indeed, Socrates.

Then, I said, a man who would be happy must not only have the good things, but he must also use them; there is no advantage in merely having them?

True.

Well, Cleinias, but if you have the use as well as the possession of good things, is that sufficient to confer happiness?

Yes, in my opinion.

And may a person use them either rightly or wrongly?

He must use them rightly.

That is quite true, I said. And the wrong use of a thing is far worse than the non-use; for the one is an evil, and the other is neither a good nor an evil. Do we not say so? 281

He assented.

Illustrations of the necessity of knowledge taken from the arts.

Now in the working and use of wood, is not that which gives the right use simply the knowledge of the carpenter?

Nothing else, he said.

And surely, in the manufacture of vessels, knowledge is that which gives the right way of making them?

He agreed.

And in the use of the goods of which we spoke at first—wealth and health and beauty, is not knowledge that which directs us to the right use of them, and regulates our practice about them?

He assented.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS.

Then in every possession and every use of a thing, knowledge is that which gives a man not only good-fortune but success?

He again assented.

And tell me, I said, O tell me, what do possessions profit a man, if he have neither good sense nor wisdom? Would a man be better off, having and doing many things without wisdom, or a few things with wisdom? Look at the matter thus: If he did fewer things would he not make fewer mistakes? if he made fewer mistakes would he not have fewer misfortunes? and if he had fewer misfortunes would he not be less miserable?

Certainly, he said.

And who would do least—a poor man or a rich man?

A poor man.

A weak man or a strong man?

A weak man.

A noble man or a mean man?

A mean man.

And a coward would do less than a courageous and temperate man?

Yes.

And an indolent man less than an active man?

He assented.

And a slow man less than a quick; and one who had dull perceptions of seeing and hearing less than one who had keen ones?

All this was mutually allowed by us.

The element of knowledge or wisdom is essential to good,

Then, I said, Cleinias, the sum of the matter appears to be that the goods of which we spoke before are not to be regarded as goods in themselves, but the degree of good and evil in them depends on whether they are or are not under the guidance of knowledge: under the guidance of ignorance, they are greater evils than their opposites, inasmuch as they are more able to minister to the evil principle which rules them; and when under the guidance of wisdom and prudence, they are greater goods: but in themselves they are nothing?

That, he replied, is obvious.

What then is the result of what has been said? Is not this

Euthydemus. the result—that other things are indifferent, and that wisdom is the only good, and ignorance the only evil?

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS. He assented.

or rather to the true and only good. Let us consider a further point, I said: Seeing that all men desire happiness, and happiness, as has been shown, is gained by a use, and a right use, of the things of life, and the right use of them, and good-fortune in the use of them, is given by knowledge,—the inference is that everybody ought by all means to try and make himself as wise as he can?

Yes, he said.

To get wisdom is necessary and honourable, if only wisdom can be taught. And when a man thinks that he ought to obtain this treasure, far more than money, from a father or a guardian or a friend or a suitor, whether citizen or stranger—the eager desire and prayer to them that they would impart wisdom to you, is not at all dishonourable, Cleinias; nor is any one to be blamed for doing any honourable service or ministration to any man, whether a lover or not, if his aim is to get wisdom. Do you agree? I said.

The youthful Cleinias is confident that it may. Yes, he said, I quite agree, and think that you are right.

Yes, I said, Cleinias, if only wisdom can be taught, and does not come to man spontaneously; for this is a point which has still to be considered, and is not yet agreed upon by you and me—

But I think, Socrates, that wisdom can be taught, he said.

Best of men, I said, I am delighted to hear you say so; and I am also grateful to you for having saved me from a long and tiresome investigation as to whether wisdom can be taught or not. But now, as you think that wisdom can be taught, and that wisdom only can make a man happy and fortunate, will you not acknowledge that all of us ought to love wisdom, and you individually will try to love her?

Certainly, Socrates, he said; I will do my best.

I was pleased at hearing this; and I turned to Dionysodorus and Euthydemus and said: That is an example, clumsy and tedious I admit, of the sort of exhortations which I would have you give—and now, will either of you set forth what I have been saying in a more artistic style: or, if you would rather not, will you at least take up the enquiry where I left off, and proceed to show the youth whether he should have all knowledge; or whether there is one sort of knowledge only which will make him good and happy, and

what that is? For, as I was saying at first, the improvement of this young man in virtue and wisdom is a matter which we have very much at heart. *Euthydemus.* SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, CTESIPPUS.

3 Thus I spoke, Crito, and was all attention to what was coming. I wanted to see how they would approach the question, and where they would start in their exhortation to the young man that he should practise wisdom and virtue. Dionysodorus, who was the elder, spoke first. Everybody's eyes were directed towards him, perceiving that something wonderful might shortly be expected. And certainly they were not far wrong; for the man, Crito, began a remarkable discourse well worth hearing, and wonderfully persuasive regarded as an exhortation to virtue.

Tell me, he said, Socrates and the rest of you who say that you want this young man to become wise, are you in jest or in real earnest?

I was led by this to imagine that they fancied us to have been jesting when we asked them to converse with the youth, and that this made them jest and play, and being under this impression, I was the more decided in saying that we were in profound earnest. Dionysodorus said:

Reflect, Socrates; you may have to deny your words.

The quibble of Dionysodorus: Those who wish Cleinias not to be ignorant wish him not to be.

I have reflected, I said; and I shall never deny my words.

Well, said he, and so you say that you wish Cleinias to become wise?

Undoubtedly.

And he is not wise as yet?

At least his modesty will not allow him to say that he is.

You wish him, he said, to become wise and not to be ignorant?

That we do.

You wish him to be what he is not, and no longer to be what he is?

I was thrown into consternation at this.

Taking advantage of my consternation, he added: You wish him no longer to be what he is, which can only mean that you wish him to perish. Pretty lovers and friends they must be who have nothing better to wish for their favourite than that he should perish!

When Ctesippus heard this he got very angry (as a lover well might) and said: Stranger of Thurii—if politeness would

Indignation of Ctesippus.

Euthydemus.

EUTHYDEMUS, CTESIPPUS.

allow me I should say, A plague upon you! What can make you tell such a lie about me and the others, which I hardly like to repeat, as that I wish Cleinias to perish?

Euthydemus replied: And do you think, Ctesippus, that it is possible to tell a lie?

No one can tell a lie, says Euthydemus, for no one can do what is not, and, if saying is doing, no one can say what is not.

Yes, said Ctesippus; I should be mad to say anything else.

And in telling a lie, do you tell the thing of which you speak or not? 2

You tell the thing of which you speak.

And he who tells, tells that thing which he tells, and no other?

Yes, said Ctesippus.

And that is a distinct thing apart from other things?

Certainly.

And he who says that thing says that which is?

Yes.

And he who says that which is, says the truth. And therefore Dionysodorus, if he says that which is, says the truth of you and no lie.

Yes, Euthydemus, said Ctesippus; but in saying this, he says what is not.

Euthydemus answered: And that which is not is not?

True.

And that which is not is nowhere?

Nowhere.

And can any one do anything about that which has no existence, or do to Cleinias that which is not and is nowhere?

I think not, said Ctesippus.

Well, but do rhetoricians, when they speak in the assembly, do nothing?

Nay, he said, they do something.

And doing is making?

Yes.

And speaking is doing and making?

He agreed.

Then no one says that which is not, for in saying what is not he would be doing something; and you have already acknowledged that no one can do what is not. And therefore, upon your own showing, no one says what is false; but

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS, DIONYSODORUS, CTESIPPUS.

if Dionysodorus says anything, he says what is true and what is.

Yes, Euthydemus, said Ctesippus; but he speaks of things in a certain way and manner, and not as they really are.

Why, Ctesippus, said Dionysodorus, do you mean to say that any one speaks of things as they are?

Yes, he said,—all gentlemen and truth-speaking persons.

And are not good things good, and evil things evil?

He assented.

And you say that gentlemen speak of things as they are?

Yes.

Then the good speak evil of evil things, if they speak of them as they are?

Yes, indeed, he said; and they speak evil of evil men. And if I may give you a piece of advice, you had better take care that they do not speak evil of you, since I can tell you that the good speak evil of the evil.

And do they speak great things of the great, rejoined Euthydemus, and warm things of the warm?

To be sure they do, said Ctesippus; and they speak coldly of the insipid and cold dialectician.

Ctesippus and the Sophists begin to quarrel; but Socrates restores good-humour with a joke.

You are abusive, Ctesippus, said Dionysodorus, you are abusive!

Indeed, I am not, Dionysodorus, he replied; for I love you and am giving you friendly advice, and, if I could, would persuade you not like a boor to say in my presence that I desire my beloved, whom I value above all men, to perish.

I saw that they were getting exasperated with one another, so I made a joke with him and said: O Ctesippus, I think that we must allow the strangers to use language in their own way, and not quarrel with them about words, but be thankful for what they give us. If they know how to destroy men in such a way as to make good and sensible men out of bad and foolish ones—whether this is a discovery of their own, or whether they have learned from some one else this new sort of death and destruction which enables them to get rid of a bad man and turn him into a good one—if they know this (and they do know this—at any rate they said just now that this was the secret of their newly-discovered art)—let them, in their phraseology, destroy the youth and make him

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CTESIPPUS, DIONYSODORUS.

wise, and all of us with him. But if you young men do not like to trust yourselves with them, then *fiat experimentum in corpore senis;* I will be the Carian on whom they shall operate. And here I offer my old person to Dionysodorus; he may put me into the pot, like Medea the Colchian, kill me, boil me, if he will only make me good.

Ctesippus said: And I, Socrates, am ready to commit myself to the strangers; they may skin me alive, if they please (and I am pretty well skinned by them already), if only my skin is made at last, not like that of Marsyas, into a leathern bottle, but into a piece of virtue. And here is Dionysodorus fancying that I am angry with him, when really I am not angry at all; I do but contradict him when I think that he is speaking improperly to me: and you must not confound abuse and contradiction, O illustrious Dionysodorus; for they are quite different things.

Dionysodorus denies the possibility of contradiction.

Contradiction! said Dionysodorus; why, there never was such a thing.

Certainly there is, he replied; there can be no question of it. Do you, Dionysodorus, maintain that there is not?

If no man can affirm a negation, no one can contradict.

You will never prove to me, he said, that you have heard any one contradicting any one else.

Indeed, said Ctesippus; then now you may hear me contradicting Dionysodorus.

Are you prepared to make that good?

Certainly, he said.

Well, have not all things words expressive of them?

Yes.

Of their existence or of their non-existence?

Of their existence.

Yes, Ctesippus, and we just now proved, as you may remember, that no man could affirm a negative; for no one could affirm that which is not.

And what does that signify? said Ctesippus; you and I may contradict all the same.

When two persons describe the same thing, or two persons

But can we contradict one another, said Dionysodorus, when both of us are describing the same thing? Then we must surely be speaking the same thing?

He assented.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, CTESIPPUS, EUTHYDEMUS.

describe different things, or one person speaks and another is silent, there is no contradiction.

Socrates takes up the argument.

The Sophists maintain that there is no such thing as falsehood or false opinion, or ignorance or the refutation of ignorance.

Or when neither of us is speaking of the same thing? For then neither of us says a word about the thing at all?

He granted that proposition also.

But when I describe something and you describe another thing, or I say something and you say nothing—is there any contradiction? How can he who speaks contradict him who speaks not?

Here Ctesippus was silent; and I in my astonishment said: What do you mean, Dionysodorus? I have often heard, and have been amazed to hear, this thesis of yours, which is maintained and employed by the disciples of Protagoras, and others before them, and which to me appears to be quite wonderful, and suicidal as well as destructive, and I think that I am most likely to hear the truth about it from you. The dictum is that there is no such thing as falsehood; a man must either say what is true or say nothing. Is not that your position?

He assented.

But if he cannot speak falsely, may he not think falsely?

No, he cannot, he said.

Then there is no such thing as false opinion?

No, he said.

Then there is no such thing as ignorance, or men who are ignorant; for is not ignorance, if there be such a thing, a mistake of fact?

Certainly, he said.

And that is impossible?

Impossible, he replied.

Are you saying this as a paradox, Dionysodorus; or do you seriously maintain no man to be ignorant?

Refute me, he said.

But how can I refute you, if, as you say, to tell a falsehood is impossible?

Very true, said Euthydemus.

Neither did I tell you just now to refute me, said Dionysodorus; for how can I tell you to do that which is not?

O Euthydemus, I said, I have but a dull conception of these subtleties and excellent devices of wisdom; I am afraid that I hardly understand them, and you must forgive me therefore if I ask a very stupid question: if there be no falsehood or

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS, DIONYSODORUS.

false opinion or ignorance, there can be no such thing as erroneous action, for a man cannot fail of acting as he is acting—that is what you mean?

Yes, he replied.

And now, I said, I will ask my stupid question: If there is no such thing as error in deed, word, or thought, then what, in the name of goodness, do you come hither to teach? And were you not just now saying that you could teach virtue best of all men, to any one who was willing to learn?

The Sophists are above consistency and all that sort of thing.

And are you such an old fool, Socrates, rejoined Dionysodorus, that you bring up now what I said at first—and if I had said anything last year, I suppose that you would bring that up too—but are non-plussed at the words which I have just uttered?

Why, I said, they are not easy to answer; for they are the words of wise men: and indeed I know not what to make of this word 'non-plussed,' which you used last: what do you mean by it, Dionysodorus? You must mean that I cannot refute your argument. Tell me if the words have any other sense?

No, he replied, they mean what you say. And now answer.

What, before you, Dionysodorus? I said.

Answer, said he.

And is that fair?

Yes, quite fair, he said.

Upon what principle? I said. I can only suppose that you are a very wise man who comes to us in the character of a great logician, and who knows when to answer and when not to answer—and now you will not open your mouth at all, because you know that you ought not.

You prate, he said, instead of answering. But if, my good sir, you admit that I am wise, answer as I tell you.

You ask me, Socrates, what sense my words have? Things which have sense are alive:—are my words alive?

I suppose that I must obey, for you are master. Put the question.

Are the things which have sense alive or lifeless?

They are alive.

And do you know of any word which is alive?

I cannot say that I do.

Then why did you ask me what sense my words had?

Why, because I was stupid and made a mistake. And yet,

perhaps, I was right after all in saying that words have a sense;—what do you say, wise man? If I was not in error, even you will not refute me, and all your wisdom will be non-plussed; but if I did fall into error, then again you are wrong in saying that there is no error,—and this remark was 288 made by you not quite a year ago. I am inclined to think, however, Dionysodorus and Euthydemus, that this argument lies where it was and is not very likely to advance: even your skill in the subtleties of logic, which is really amazing, has not found out the way of throwing another and not falling yourself, now any more than of old.

Euthydemus. SOCRATES, CTESIPPUS, CLEINIAS. Socrates retorts upon the Sophists their own statement that error cannot be refuted.

Ctesippus said: Men of Chios, Thurii, or however and whatever you call yourselves, I wonder at you, for you seem to have no objection to talking nonsense.

High words.

Fearing that there would be high words, I again endeavoured to soothe Ctesippus, and said to him: To you, Ctesippus, I must repeat what I said before to Cleinias—that you do not understand the ways of these philosophers from abroad. They are not serious, but, like the Egyptian wizard, Proteus, they take different forms and deceive us by their enchantments: and let us, like Menelaus, refuse to let them go until they show themselves to us in earnest. When they begin to be in earnest their full beauty will appear: let us then beg and entreat and beseech them to shine forth. And I think that I had better once more exhibit the form in which I pray to behold them; it might be a guide to them. I will go on therefore where I left off, as well as I can, in the hope that I may touch their hearts and move them to pity, and that when they see me deeply serious and interested, they also may be serious. You, Cleinias, I said, shall remind me at what point we left off. Did we not agree that philosophy should be studied? and was not that our conclusion?

Socrates again tries to pour oil upon the waters.

Yes, he replied.

And philosophy is the acquisition of knowledge?

Yes, he said.

And what knowledge ought we to acquire? May we not answer with absolute truth—A knowledge which will do us good?

Certainly, he said.

And should we be any the better if we went about having a

Euthydemus. knowledge of the places where most gold was hidden in the earth?

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS. Perhaps we should, he said.

The old argument resumed. But have we not already proved, I said, that we should be none the better off, even if without trouble and digging all the gold which there is in the earth were ours? And if we knew how to convert stones into gold, the knowledge would 28
be of no value to us, unless we also knew how to use the gold? Do you not remember? I said.

I quite remember, he said.

Nor would any other knowledge, whether of money-making, or of medicine, or of any other art which knows only how to make a thing, and not to use it when made, be of any good to us. Am I not right?

He agreed.

And if there were a knowledge which was able to make men immortal, without giving them the knowledge of the way to use the immortality, neither would there be any use in that, if we may argue from the analogy of the previous instances?

To all this he agreed.

Then, my dear boy, I said, the knowledge which we want is one that uses as well as makes?

True, he said.

The knowledge which makes is not to be separated from the knowledge which uses. And our desire is not to be skilful lyre-makers, or artists of that sort—far otherwise; for with them the art which makes is one, and the art which uses is another. Although they have to do with the same, they are divided: for the art which makes and the art which plays on the lyre differ widely from one another. Am I not right?

He agreed.

And clearly we do not want the art of the flute-maker; this is only another of the same sort?

He assented.

But suppose, I said, that we were to learn the art of making speeches—would that be the art which would make us happy?

I should say, no, rejoined Cleinias.

And why should you say so? I asked.

I see, he replied, that there are some composers of speeches who do not know how to use the speeches which they make,

Euthydemus

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS.

just as the makers of lyres do not know how to use the lyres, and also some who are of themselves unable to compose speeches, but are able to use the speeches which the others make for them; and this proves that the art of making speeches is not the same as the art of using them.

Yes, I said; and I take your words to be a sufficient proof that the art of making speeches is not one which will make a man happy. And yet I did think that the art which we have so long been seeking might be discovered in that direction; for the composers of speeches, whenever I meet them, always appear to me to be very extraordinary men, Cleinias, and their art is lofty and divine, and no wonder. For their art is
290 a part of the great art of enchantment, and hardly, if at all, inferior to it: and whereas the art of the enchanter is a mode of charming snakes and spiders and scorpions, and other monsters and pests, this art of their's acts upon dicasts and ecclesiasts and bodies of men, for the charming and pacifying of them. Do you agree with me?

The sophistical art is a part of the greater art of enchantment.

Yes, he said, I think that you are quite right.

Whither then shall we go, I said, and to what art shall we have recourse?

I do not see my way, he said.

But I think that I do, I replied.

And what is your notion? asked Cleinias.

I think that the art of the general is above all others the one of which the possession is most likely to make a man happy.

I do not think so, he said.

Why not? I said.

The art of the general is surely an art of hunting mankind.

What of that? I said.

Why, he said, no art of hunting extends beyond hunting and capturing; and when the prey is taken the huntsman or fisherman cannot use it; but they hand it over to the cook, and the geometricians and astronomers and calculators (who all belong to the hunting class, for they do not make their diagrams, but only find out that which was previously contained in them)—they, I say, not being able to use but only to catch their prey, hand over their inventions to the dialectician to be applied by him, if they have any sense in them.

Cleinias of his own accord declares that the art of the general is not the one most likely to make men happy, because, like the hunts-

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CLEINIAS, CRITO.

Good, I said, fairest and wisest Cleinias. And is this true?

Certainly, he said; just as a general when he takes a city or a camp hands over his new acquisition to the statesman, for he does not know how to use them himself; or as the quail-taker transfers the quails to the keeper of them. If we are looking for the art which is to make us blessed, and which is able to use that which it makes or takes, the art of the general is not the one, and some other must be found.

man, he can only take and not use the prey.

Cri. And do you mean, Socrates, that the youngster said all this?

Crito suspects that neither Cleinias nor Ctesippus is the author of this observation, but some one far superior to either of them.

Soc. Are you incredulous, Crito?

Cri. Indeed, I am; for if he did say so, then in my opinion he needs neither Euthydemus nor any one else to be his instructor.

Soc. Perhaps I may have forgotten, and Ctesippus was the real answerer.

Cri. Ctesippus! nonsense. 291

Soc. All I know is that I heard these words, and that they were not spoken either by Euthydemus or Dionysodorus. I dare say, my good Crito, that they may have been spoken by some superior person: but that I heard them I am certain.

Cri. Yes, indeed, Socrates, by some one a good deal superior, as I should be disposed to think. But did you carry the search any further, and did you find the art which you were seeking?

Soc. Find! my dear sir, no indeed. And we cut a poor figure; we were like children after larks, always on the point of catching the art, which was always getting away from us. But why should I repeat the whole story? At last we came to the kingly art, and enquired whether that gave and caused happiness, and then we got into a labyrinth, and when we thought we were at the end, came out again at the beginning, having still to seek as much as ever.

Cri. How did that happen, Socrates?

Soc. I will tell you; the kingly art was identified by us with the political.

Cri. Well, and what followed?

Soc. To this royal or political art all the arts, including the

art of the general, seemed to render up the supremacy, that being the only one which knew how to use what they produce. Here obviously was the very art which we were seeking—the art which is the source of good government, and which may be described, in the language of Aeschylus, as alone sitting at the helm of the vessel of state, piloting and governing all things, and utilizing them.

Euthydemus. SOCRATES, CRITO.

Pursuing the enquiry, we found that the royal or political art was the only one which knew how the other arts were to be used.

Cri. And were you not right, Socrates?

Soc. You shall judge, Crito, if you are willing to hear what followed; for we resumed the enquiry, and a question of this sort was asked: Does the kingly art, having this supreme authority, do anything for us? To be sure, was the answer. And would not you, Crito, say the same?

Cri. Yes, I should.

Soc. And what would you say that the kingly art does? If medicine were supposed to have supreme authority over the subordinate arts, and I were to ask you a similar question about that, you would say—it produces health?

Cri. I should.

Soc. And supposing your own art of husbandry to have supreme authority over the subject arts—what does that do?
292 Does it not supply us with the fruits of the earth?

Cri. Yes.

Soc. And what does the kingly art do when invested with supreme power? Perhaps you may not be ready with an answer.

Such an art ought to make us useful, and, if wisdom is the most useful of all things, should impart wisdom to us.

Cri. Indeed I am not, Socrates.

Soc. No more were we, Crito. But at any rate you know that if this is the art which we were seeking, it ought to be useful.

Cri. Certainly.

Soc. And surely it ought to do us some good?

Cri. Certainly, Socrates.

Soc. And Cleinias and I had arrived at the conclusion that knowledge of some kind is the only good.

Cri. Yes, that was what you were saying.

Soc. All the other results of politics, and they are many, as for example, wealth, freedom, tranquillity, were neither good nor evil in themselves; but the political science ought to make us wise, and impart knowledge to us, if that is

Euthydemus. the science which is likely to do us good, and make us happy.

SOCRATES, CRITO, EUTHYDEMUS.

Cri. Yes; that was the conclusion at which you had arrived, according to your report of the conversation.

Soc. And does the kingly art make men wise and good?

Cri. Why not, Socrates?

Soc. What, all men, and in every respect? and teach them all the arts,—carpentering, and cobbling, and the rest of them?

Cri. I think not, Socrates.

What is this superior knowledge?

Soc. But then what is this knowledge, and what are we to do with it? For it is not the source of any works which are neither good nor evil, and gives no knowledge, but the knowledge of itself; let us determine then what it can be, and what we shall do with it. Shall we say, Crito, that it is the knowledge by which we are to make other men good?

Cri. By all means.

Soc. And in what will they be good and useful? Shall we repeat that they will make others good, and that these others will make others again, without ever determining in what they are to be good; for we have put aside the results of politics, as they are called. This is the old, old song over again; and we are just as far as ever, if not farther, from the knowledge of the art or science of happiness.

Cri. Indeed, Socrates, you do appear to have got into a great perplexity.

Socrates in perplexity turns to the two Sophists for an answer.

Soc. Thereupon, Crito, seeing that I was on the point of shipwreck, I lifted up my voice, and earnestly entreated and 293
called upon the strangers to save me and the youth from the whirlpool of the argument; they were our Castor and Pollux, I said, and they should be serious, and show us in sober earnest what that knowledge was which would enable us to pass the rest of our lives in happiness.

Cri. And did Euthydemus show you this knowledge?

Soc. Yes, indeed; he proceeded in a lofty strain to the following effect: Would you rather, Socrates, said he, that I should show you this knowledge about which you have been doubting, or shall I prove that you already have it?

What, I said, are you blessed with such a power as this?

Indeed I am.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS, DIONYSODORUS.

Then I would much rather that you should prove me to have such a knowledge; at my time of life that will be more agreeable than having to learn.

Then tell me, he said, do you know anything?

Yes, I said, I know many things, but not anything of much importance.

Socrates admits that he knows something and does not know other things.

That will do, he said: And would you admit that anything is what it is, and at the same time is not what it is?

Certainly not.

And did you not say that you knew something?

I did.

If you know, you are knowing.

Certainly, of the knowledge which I have.

That makes no difference;—and must you not, if you are knowing, know all things?

Certainly not, I said, for there are many other things which I do not know.

And if you do not know, you are not knowing.

Yes, friend, of that which I do not know.

But if so, he knows and does not know at the same time.

Still you are not knowing, and you said just now that you were knowing; and therefore you are and are not at the same time, and in reference to the same things.

A pretty clatter, as men say, Euthydemus, this of yours! and will you explain how I possess the knowledge for which we were seeking? Do you mean to say that the same thing cannot be and also not be; and therefore, since I know one thing, that I know all, for I cannot be knowing and not knowing at the same time, and if I know all things, then I must have the knowledge for which we are seeking—May I assume this to be your ingenious notion?

Out of your own mouth, Socrates, you are convicted, he said.

Well, but, Euthydemus, I said, has that never happened to you? for if I am only in the same case with you and our beloved Dionysodorus, I cannot complain. Tell me, then, you two, do you not know some things, and not know others?

Certainly not, Socrates, said Dionysodorus.

What do you mean, I said; do you know nothing?

Nay, he replied, we do know something.

Euthydemus. SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, CTESIPPUS.

Then, I said, you know all things, if you know anything? 29

Yes, all things, he said; and that is as true of you as of us.

O, indeed, I said, what a wonderful thing, and what a great blessing! And do all other men know all things or nothing?

But this is impossible; and therefore if he knows, he knows all things.

Certainly, he replied; they cannot know some things, and not know others, and be at the same time knowing and not knowing.

Then what is the inference? I said.

They all know all things, he replied, if they know one thing.

O heavens, Dionysodorus, I said, I see now that you are in earnest; hardly have I got you to that point. And do you really and truly know all things, including carpentering and leather-cutting?

Certainly, he said.

And do you know stitching?

Yes, by the gods, we do, and cobbling, too.

And do you know things such as the numbers of the stars and of the sand?

Certainly; did you think we should say No to that?

Ctesippus requires a proof of their universal knowledge. They shall tell him the number of one another's teeth, and he will count them.

By Zeus, said Ctesippus, interrupting, I only wish that you would give me some proof which would enable me to know whether you speak truly.

What proof shall I give you? he said.

Will you tell me how many teeth Euthydemus has? and Euthydemus shall tell how many teeth you have.

Will you not take our word that we know all things?

Certainly not, said Ctesippus: you must further tell us this one thing, and then we shall know that you are speaking the truth; if you tell us the number, and we count them, and you are found to be right, we will believe the rest. They fancied that Ctesippus was making game of them, and they refused, and they would only say, in answer to each of his questions, that they knew all things. For at last Ctesippus began to throw off all restraint; no question was too bad for him; he would ask them if they knew the foulest things, and they, like wild boars, came rushing on his blows, and fearlessly replied that they did. At last, Crito, I too was carried

away by my incredulity, and asked Euthydemus whether Dionysodorus could dance. *Euthydemus.*

Certainly, he replied. SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, EUTHYDEMUS.

And can he vault among swords, and turn upon a wheel, at his age? has he got to such a height of skill as that?

He can do anything, he said.

And did you always know this?

Always, he said.

When you were children, and at your birth?

They both said that they did.

This we could not believe. And Euthydemus said: You are incredulous, Socrates.

Yes, I said, and I might well be incredulous, if I did not know you to be wise men.

But if you will answer, he said, I will make you confess to similar marvels.

Well, I said, there is nothing that I should like better than to be self-convicted of this, for if I am really a wise man, which I never knew before, and you will prove to me that I know and have always known all things, nothing in life would be a greater gain to me. Socrates would like to be self-convicted of wisdom.

Answer then, he said.

Ask, I said, and I will answer.

Do you know something, Socrates, or nothing?

Something, I said.

And do you know with what you know, or with something else?

With what I know; and I suppose that you mean with my soul?

Are you not ashamed, Socrates, of asking a question when you are asked one?

Well, I said; but then what am I to do? for I will do whatever you bid; when I do not know what you are asking, you tell me to answer nevertheless, and not to ask again.

Why, you surely have some notion of my meaning, he said.

Yes, I replied.

Well, then, answer according to your notion of my meaning.

Euthydemus. Yes, I said; but if the question which you ask in one sense is understood and answered by me in another, will that please you—if I answer what is not to the point?

SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS. It will please me very well; but will not please you equally well, I imagine.

I certainly will not answer unless I understand you, I said.

You will not answer, he said, according to your view of the meaning, because you will be prating, and are an ancient.

Socrates will not quarrel with the two Sophists; for he desires to become their pupil.

Now I saw that he was getting angry with me for drawing distinctions, when he wanted to catch me in his springes of words. And I remembered that Connus was always angry with me when I opposed him, and then he neglected me, because he thought that I was stupid; and as I was intending to go to Euthydemus as a pupil, I reflected that I had better let him have his way, as he might think me a blockhead, and refuse to take me. So I said: You are a far better dialectician than myself, Euthydemus, for I have never made a profession of the art, and therefore do as you say; ask your questions once more, and I will answer.

Answer then, he said, again, whether you know what you know with something, or with nothing.

Yes, I said; I know with my soul.

The man will answer more than the question; for I did not ask you, he said, with what you know, but whether you know with something.

Again I replied, Through ignorance I have answered too much, but I hope that you will forgive me. And now I will answer simply that I always know what I know with something.

And is that something, he rejoined, always the same. or sometimes one thing, and sometimes another thing?

Always, I replied, when I know, I know with this.

Will you not cease adding to your answers?

My fear is that this word 'always' may get us into trouble.

You, perhaps, but certainly not us. And now answer: Do you always know with this?

Always; since I am required to withdraw the words 'when I know.'

You always know with this, or, always knowing, do you

know some things with this, and some things with something else, or do you know all things with this?

Euthydemus. SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS, DIONYSODORUS. Socrates is compelled to admit that he always knows all things with the same thing.

All that I know, I replied, I know with this.

There again, Socrates, he said, the addition is superfluous.

Well, then, I said, I will take away the words 'that I know.'

Nay, take nothing away; I desire no favours of you; but let me ask: Would you be able to know all things, if you did not know all things?

Quite impossible.

And now, he said, you may add on whatever you like, for you confess that you know all things.

I suppose that is true, I said, if my qualification implied in the words 'that I know' is not allowed to stand; and so I do know all things.

And have you not admitted that you always know all things with that which you know, whether you make the addition of 'when you know them' or not? for you have acknowledged that you have always and at the same time known all things, that is to say, when you were a child, and at your birth, and when you were growing up, and before you were born, and before the heaven and earth existed, you knew all things, if you always know them; and I swear that you shall always continue to know all things, if I am of the mind to make you.

But I hope that you will be of that mind, reverend Euthydemus, I said, if you are really speaking the truth, and yet I a little doubt your power to make good your words unless you have the help of your brother Dionysodorus; then you may do it. Tell me now, both of you, for although in the main I cannot doubt that I really do know all things, when I am told so by men of your prodigious wisdom—how can I say that I know such things, Euthydemus, as that the good are unjust; come, do I know that or not?

Certainly, you know that.

What do I know?

That the good are not unjust.

Quite true, I said; and that I have always known; but the question is, where did I learn that the good are unjust?

But he does not know that the good are unjust; therefore,

Nowhere, said Dionysodorus.

Then, I said, I do not know this.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, EUTHYDEMUS, DIONYSODORUS.

You are ruining the argument, said Euthydemus to Dionysodorus; he will be proved not to know, and then after all he will be knowing and not knowing at the same time.

Dionysodorus blushed.

there are some things which he does not know.

I turned to the other, and said, What do you think, Euthydemus? Does not your omniscient brother appear to you to have made a mistake?

What, replied Dionysodorus in a moment; am I the brother of Euthydemus?

Dionysodorus reproved by his brother Sophist.

Thereupon I said, Please not to interrupt, my good friend, or prevent Euthydemus from proving to me that I know the good to be unjust; such a lesson you might at least allow me to learn.

You are running away, Socrates, said Dionysodorus, and refusing to answer.

Socrates cannot fight against the pair any more than Heracles against the Hydra.

No wonder, I said, for I am not a match for one of you, and *a fortiori* I must run away from two. I am no Heracles; and even Heracles could not fight against the Hydra, who was a she-Sophist, and had the wit to shoot up many new heads when one of them was cut off; especially when he saw a second monster of a sea-crab, who was also a Sophist, and appeared to have newly arrived from a sea-voyage, bearing down upon him from the left, opening his mouth and biting. When the monster was growing troublesome he called Iolaus, his nephew, to his help, who ably succoured him; but if my Iolaus, who is my brother Patrocles [the statuary], were to come, he would only make a bad business worse.

And now that you have delivered yourself of this strain, said Dionysodorus, will you inform me whether Iolaus was the nephew of Heracles any more than he is yours?

I suppose that I had best answer you, Dionysodorus, I said, for you will insist on asking—that I pretty well know—out of envy, in order to prevent me from learning the wisdom of Euthydemus.

Then answer me, he said.

Disputes about the words nephew, brother, or father, as

Well then, I said, I can only reply that Iolaus was not my nephew at all, but the nephew of Heracles; and his father was not my brother Patrocles, but Iphicles, who has a name rather like his, and was the brother of Heracles.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, EUTHYDEMUS, CTESIPPUS.

And is Patrocles, he said, your brother?

Yes, I said, he is my half-brother, the son of my mother, but not of my father.

Then he is and is not your brother.

Not by the same father, my good man, I said, for Chaeredemus was his father, and mine was Sophroniscus.

they are taken in an absolute or in a relative sense.

And was Sophroniscus a father, and Chaeredemus also?

Yes, I said; the former was my father, and the latter his.

298 Then, he said, Chaeredemus is not a father.

He is not my father, I said.

But can a father be other than a father? or are you the same as a stone?

I certainly do not think that I am a stone, I said, though I am afraid that you may prove me to be one.

Are you not other than a stone?

I am.

And being other than a stone, you are not a stone; and being other than gold, you are not gold?

Very true.

And so Chaeredemus, he said, being other than a father, is not a father?

I suppose that he is not a father, I replied.

For if, said Euthydemus, taking up the argument, Chaeredemus is a father, then Sophroniscus, being other than a father, is not a father; and you, Socrates, are without a father.

Ctesippus, here taking up the argument, said: And is not your father in the same case, for he is other than my father?

Assuredly not, said Euthydemus.

Then he is the same?

He is the same.

The father of Euthydemus is declared to be the father of all, and not only of all men, but of all animals.

I cannot say that I like the connection; but is he only my father, Euthydemus, or is he the father of all other men?

Of all other men, he replied. Do you suppose the same person to be a father and not a father?

Certainly, I did so imagine, said Ctesippus.

And do you suppose that gold is not gold, or that a man is not a man?

They are not '*in pari materia*,' Euthydemus, said Ctesippus,

Euthydemus. and you had better take care, for it is monstrous to suppose that your father is the father of all.

EUTHYDEMUS, CTESSIPPUS, DIONYSODORUS.

But he is, he replied.

What, of men only, said Ctesippus, or of horses and of all other animals?

Of all, he said.

And your mother, too, is the mother of all?

Yes, our mother too.

Yes; and your mother has a progeny of sea-urchins then?

Yes; and yours, he said.

And gudgeons and puppies and pigs are your brothers?

And yours too.

And your papa is a dog?

And so is yours, he said.

Proceeding in the same line of argument, Dionysodorus declares that a dog who has puppies is a father, and Euthydemus adds that he who beats his dog beats his own father.

If you will answer my questions, said Dionysodorus, I will soon extract the same admissions from you, Ctesippus. You say that you have a dog?

Yes, a villain of a one, said Ctesippus.

And he has puppies?

Yes, and they are very like himself.

And the dog is the father of them?

Yes, he said, I certainly saw him and the mother of the puppies come together.

And is he not yours?

To be sure he is.

Then he is a father, and he is yours; ergo, he is your father, and the puppies are your brothers.

Let me ask you one little question more, said Euthydemus, quickly interposing, in order that Ctesippus might not get in his word: You beat this dog?

Ctesippus said, laughing, Indeed I do; and I only wish that I could beat you instead of him.

Then you beat your father, he said.

I should have far more reason to beat yours, said Ctesippus; what could he have been thinking of when he begat such wise sons? much good has this father of you and your brethren the puppies got out of this wisdom of yours.

But neither he nor you, Ctesippus, have any need of much good.

And have you no need, Euthydemus? he said.

Euthydemus.

CTESIPPUS, EUTHYDEMUS.

Neither I nor any other man; for tell me now, Ctesippus, if you think it good or evil for a man who is sick to drink medicine when he wants it; or to go to war armed rather than unarmed.

Good, I say. And yet I know that I am going to be caught in one of your charming puzzles.

When a thing is good, you cannot have too much of it.

That, he replied, you will discover, if you answer; since you admit medicine to be good for a man to drink, when wanted, must it not be good for him to drink as much as possible; when he takes his medicine, a cartload of hellebore will not be too much for him?

Ctesippus said: Quite so, Euthydemus, that is to say, if he who drinks is as big as the statue of Delphi.

And seeing that in war to have arms is a good thing, he ought to have as many spears and shields as possible?

Very true, said Ctesippus; and do you think, Euthydemus, that he ought to have one shield only, and one spear?

I do.

And would you arm Geryon and Briareus in that way? Considering that you and your companion fight in armour, I thought that you would have known better. . . . Here Euthydemus held his peace, but Dionysodorus returned to the previous answer of Ctesippus and said:—

Do you not think that the possession of gold is a good thing?

Yes, said Ctesippus, and the more the better.

And to have money everywhere and always is a good?

Certainly, a great good, he said.

And you admit gold to be a good?

Certainly, he replied.

And ought not a man then to have gold everywhere and always, and as much as possible in himself, and may he not be deemed the happiest of men who has three talents of gold in his belly, and a talent in his pate, and a stater of gold in either eye?

Yes, Euthydemus, said Ctesippus; and the Scythians reckon those who have gold in their own skulls to be the happiest and bravest of men (that is only another instance of your manner of speaking about the dog and father), and what is still more extraordinary, they drink out of their own skulls

Euthydemus.

EUTHYDEMUS, CTESIPPUS, DIONYSODORUS.

gilt, and see the inside of them, and hold their own head in their hands.

And do the Scythians and others see that which has the quality of vision, or that which has not? said Euthydemus. 3

That which has the quality of vision clearly.

You see that which has the quality of vision; you see our garments; therefore they have the quality of vision.

And[1] you also see that which has the quality of vision? he said.

Yes, I do.

Then do you see our garments?

Yes.

Then our garments have the quality of vision.

They can see to any extent, said Ctesippus.

What can they see?

Nothing; but you, my sweet man, may perhaps imagine that they do not see; and certainly, Euthydemus, you do seem to me to have been caught napping when you were not asleep, and that if it be possible to speak and say nothing—you are doing so.

And may there not be a silence of the speaker? said Dionysodorus.

Impossible, said Ctesippus.

Or a speaking of the silent?

[1] Note: the ambiguity of *δυνατὰ ὁρᾶν*, 'things visible and able to see,' *σιγῶντα λέγειν*, 'the speaking of the silent,' the silent denoting either the speaker or the subject of the speech, cannot be perfectly rendered in English. Compare Aristot. Soph. Elenchi, c. iv. (Poste's translation, p. 9):—

'Of ambiguous propositions the following are instances:—

'I hope that you the enemy may slay.

'Whom one knows, he knows. Either the person knowing or the person known is here affirmed to know.

'What one sees, that one sees: one sees a pillar: ergo, that one pillar sees.

'What you *are* holding, that you are: you are holding a stone: ergo, a stone you are.

'Is a speaking of the silent possible? "The silent" denotes either the speaker or the subject of speech.

'There are three kinds of ambiguity of term or proposition. The first is when there is an equal linguistic propriety in several interpretations; the second when one is improper but customary; the third when the ambiguity arises in the combination of elements that are in themselves unambiguous, as in "knowing letters." "Knowing" and "letters" are perhaps separately unambiguous, but in combination may imply either that the letters are known, or that they themselves have knowledge. Such are the modes in which propositions and terms may be ambiguous.'

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CTESIPPUS, EUTHYDEMUS, DIONYSODORUS.

That is still more impossible, he said.

But when you speak of stones, wood, iron bars, do you not speak of the silent?

Not when I pass a smithy; for then the iron bars make a tremendous noise and outcry if they are touched: so that here your wisdom is strangely mistaken; please, however, to tell me how you can be silent when speaking (I thought that Ctesippus was put upon his mettle because Cleinias was present).

A similar *double entendre.*

When you are silent, said Euthydemus, is there not a silence of all things?

Yes, he said.

But if speaking things are included in all things, then the speaking are silent.

The speaker may be silent or may speak, or both.

What, said Ctesippus; then all things are not silent?

Certainly not, said Euthydemus.

Then, my good friend, do they all speak?

Yes; those which speak.

Nay, said Ctesippus, but the question which I ask is whether all things are silent or speak?

Neither and both, said Dionysodorus, quickly interposing; I am sure that you will be 'non-plussed' at that answer.

Here Ctesippus, as his manner was, burst into a roar of laughter; he said, That brother of yours, Euthydemus, has got into a dilemma; all is over with him. This delighted Cleinias, whose laughter made Ctesippus ten times as uproarious; but I cannot help thinking that the rogue must have picked up this answer from them; for there has been no wisdom like theirs in our time. Why do you laugh, Cleinias, I said, at such solemn and beautiful things?

Why, Socrates, said Dionysodorus, did you ever see a beautiful thing?

Yes, Dionysodorus, I replied, I have seen many.

301 Were they other than the beautiful, or the same as the beautiful?

The Sophist lightly touches upon the doctrine of ideas.

Now I was in a great quandary at having to answer this question, and I thought that I was rightly served for having opened my mouth at all: I said however, They are not the same as absolute beauty, but they have beauty present with each of them.

Euthydemus. And are you an ox because an ox is present with you, or are you Dionysodorus, because Dionysodorus is present with you?

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS.

God forbid, I replied.

But how, he said, by reason of one thing being present with another, will one thing be another?

Is that your difficulty? I said. For I was beginning to imitate their skill, on which my heart was set.

Of course, he replied, I and all the world are in a difficulty about the non-existent.

What do you mean, Dionysodorus? I said. Is not the honourable honourable and the base base?

That, he said, is as I please.

And do you please?

Yes, he said.

Fresh quibbles.

And you will admit that the same is the same, and the other other; for surely the other is not the same; I should imagine that even a child will hardly deny the other to be other. But I think, Dionysodorus, that you must have intentionally missed the last question; for in general you and your brother seem to me to be good workmen in your own department, and to do the dialectician's business excellently well.

What, said he, is the business of a good workman? tell me, in the first place, whose business is hammering?

The smith's.

And whose the making of pots?

The potter's.

And who has to kill and skin and mince and boil and roast?

The cook, I said.

And if a man does his business he does rightly?

Certainly.

And the business of the cook is to cut up and skin; you have admitted that?

Yes, I have, but you must not be too hard upon me.

Then if some one were to kill, mince, boil, roast the cook, he would do his business, and if he were to hammer the smith, and make a pot of the potter, he would do their business.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS.

Poseidon, I said, this is the crown of wisdom; can I ever hope to have such wisdom of my own?

And would you be able, Socrates, to recognize this wisdom when it has become your own?

Certainly, I said, if you will allow me.

What, he said, do you think that you know what is your own?

Yes, I do, subject to your correction; for you are the bottom, and Euthydemus is the top, of all my wisdom.

That which is your own you can give away or sell; e.g. the ox or sheep which you sacrifice.

Is not that which you would deem your own, he said, that which you have in your own power, and which you are able
302 to use as you would desire, for example, an ox or a sheep—would you not think that which you could sell and give and sacrifice to any god whom you pleased, to be your own, and that which you could not give or sell or sacrifice you would think not to be in your own power?

Yes, I said (for I was certain that something good would come out of the questions, which I was impatient to hear); yes, such things, and such things only are mine.

Yes, he said, and you would mean by animals living beings?

Yes, I said.

You agree then, that those animals only are yours with which you have the power to do all these things which I was just naming?

I agree.

Then, after a pause, in which he seemed to be lost in the contemplation of something great, he said: Tell me, Socrates, have you an ancestral Zeus? Here, anticipating the final move, like a person caught in a net, who gives a desperate twist that he may get away, I said: No, Dionysodorus, I have not.

What a miserable man you must be then, he said; you are not an Athenian at all if you have no ancestral gods or temples, or any other mark of gentility.

Nay, Dionysodorus, I said, do not be rude; good words, if you please; in the way of religion I have altars and temples, domestic and ancestral, and all that other Athenians have.

And have not other Athenians, he said, an ancestral Zeus?

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, DIONYSODORUS, EUTHYDEMUS, CTESIPPUS.

That name, I said, is not to be found among the Ionians, whether colonists or citizens of Athens; an ancestral Apollo there is, who is the father of Ion, and a family Zeus, and a Zeus guardian of the phratry, and an Athene guardian of the phratry. But the name of ancestral Zeus is unknown to us.

No matter, said Dionysodorus, for you admit that you have Apollo, Zeus, and Athene.

Certainly, I said.

And they are your gods, he said.

Yes, I said, my lords and ancestors.

At any rate they are yours, he said, did you not admit that?

I did, I said; what is going to happen to me?

And are not these gods animals? for you admit that all things which have life are animals; and have not these gods life?

They have life, I said.

Then are they not animals?

They are animals, I said.

Gods are animals; and if it is admitted that animals may be sold, then the gods may be sold.

And you admitted that of animals those are yours which you could give away or sell or offer in sacrifice, as you pleased?

I did, Euthydemus, and I have no way of escape.

Well then, said he, if you admit that Zeus and the other 303
gods are yours, can you sell them or give them away or do what you will with them, as you would with other animals?

At this I was quite struck dumb, Crito, and lay prostrate. Ctesippus came to the rescue.

Bravo, Heracles, brave words, said he.

Bravo Heracles, or is Heracles a Bravo? said Dionysodorus.

Poseidon, said Ctesippus, what awful distinctions. I will have no more of them; the pair are invincible.

Then, my dear Crito, there was universal applause of the speakers and their words, and what with laughing and clapping of hands and rejoicings the two men were quite overpowered; for hitherto their partisans only had cheered at each successive hit, but now the whole company shouted with delight until the columns of the Lyceum returned the

sound, seeming to sympathize in their joy. To such a pitch was I affected myself, that I made a speech, in which I acknowledged that I had never seen the like of their wisdom; I was their devoted servant, and fell to praising and admiring of them. What marvellous dexterity of wit, I said, enabled you to acquire this great perfection in such a short time? There is much, indeed, to admire in your words, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, but there is nothing that I admire more than your magnanimous disregard of any opinion—whether of the many, or of the grave and reverend seigniors—you regard only those who are like yourselves. And I do verily believe that there are few who are like you, and who would approve of such arguments; the majority of mankind are so ignorant of their value, that they would be more ashamed of employing them in the refutation of others than of being refuted by them. I must further express my approval of your kind and public-spirited denial of all differences, whether of good and evil, white or black, or any other; the result of which is that, as you say, every mouth is sewn up, not excepting your own, which graciously follows the example of others; and thus all ground of offence is taken away. But what appears to me to be more than all is, that this art and invention of yours has been so admirably contrived by you, that in a very short time it can be imparted to any one. 304 I observed that Ctesippus learned to imitate you in no time. Now this quickness of attainment is an excellent thing; but at the same time I would advise you not to have any more public entertainments; there is a danger that men may undervalue an art which they have so easy an opportunity of acquiring; the exhibition would be best of all, if the discussion were confined to your two selves; but if there must be an audience, let him only be present who is willing to pay a handsome fee;—you should be careful of this;—and if you are wise, you will also bid your disciples discourse with no man but you and themselves. For only what is rare is valuable; and 'water,' which, as Pindar says, is the 'best of all things,' is also the cheapest. And now I have only to request that you will receive Cleinias and me among your pupils.

Euthydemus. SOCRATES, CRITO.

Such was the discussion, Crito; and after a few more

Euthydemus. words had passed between us we went away. I hope that you will come to them with me, since they say that they are able to teach any one who will give them money; no age or want of capacity is an impediment. And I must repeat one thing which they said, for your especial benefit,—that the learning of their art did not at all interfere with the business of money-making.

SOCRATES, CRITO.

Crito remonstrates with Socrates on the impropriety of entering into discussion with such men as the two Sophists;

Cri. Truly, Socrates, though I am curious and ready to learn, yet I fear that I am not like-minded with Euthydemus, but one of the other sort, who, as you were saying, would rather be refuted by such arguments than use them in refutation of others. And though I may appear ridiculous in venturing to advise you, I think that you may as well hear what was said to me by a man of very considerable pretensions—he was a professor of legal oratory—who came away from you while I was walking up and down. 'Crito,' said he to me, 'are you giving no attention to these wise men?' 'No, indeed,' I said to him; 'I could not get within hearing of them—there was such a crowd.' 'You would have heard something worth hearing if you had.' 'What was that?' I said. 'You would have heard the greatest masters of the art of rhetoric discoursing.' 'And what did you think of them?' I said. 'What did I think of them?' he said:—'theirs was the sort of discourse which anybody might hear from men who were playing the fool, and making much ado about nothing.' That was the expression which he used. 'Surely,' I said, 'philosophy is a charming thing.' 'Charming!' he said; 'what simplicity! philosophy is nought; and I think that if you had been present you would have been ashamed of your friend—his conduct was so very strange in placing himself at the mercy of men who care not what they say, and fasten upon every word. And these, as I was telling you, are supposed to be the most eminent professors of their time. But the truth is, Crito, that the study itself and the men themselves are utterly mean and ridiculous.' Now censure of the pursuit, Socrates, whether coming from him or from others, appears to me to be undeserved; but as to the impropriety of holding a public discussion with such men, there, I confess that, in my opinion, he was in the right.

and confirms his opinion by that of an Athenian pleader.

Euthydemus.

SOCRATES, CRITO.

Soc. O Crito, they are marvellous men; but what was I going to say? First of all let me know;—What manner of man was he who came up to you and censured philosophy; was he an orator who himself practises in the courts, or an instructor of orators, who makes the speeches with which they do battle?

Cri. He was certainly not an orator, and I doubt whether he had ever been into court; but they say that he knows the business, and is a clever man, and composes wonderful speeches.

Socrates in return disparages Crito's informant. He belongs to a hybrid class, who are a cross between philosophers and politicians, and inferior to either.

Soc. Now I understand, Crito; he is one of an amphibious class, whom I was on the point of mentioning—one of those whom Prodicus describes as on the border-ground between philosophers and statesmen—they think that they are the wisest of all men, and that they are generally esteemed the wisest; nothing but the rivalry of the philosophers stands in their way; and they are of the opinion that if they can prove the philosophers to be good for nothing, no one will dispute their title to the palm of wisdom, for that they are themselves really the wisest, although they are apt to be mauled by Euthydemus and his friends, when they get hold of them in conversation. This opinion which they entertain of their own wisdom is very natural; for they have a certain amount of philosophy, and a certain amount of political wisdom; there is reason in what they say, for they argue that they have just enough of both, and so they keep out of the way of all risks and conflicts and reap the fruits of their wisdom.

Cri. What do you say of them, Socrates? There is certainly something specious in that notion of theirs.

Soc. Yes, Crito, there is more speciousness than truth; 306 they cannot be made to understand the nature of intermediates. For all persons or things, which are intermediate between two other things, and participate in both of them—if one of these two things is good and the other evil, are better than the one and worse than the other; but if they are in a mean between two good things which do not tend to the same end, they fall short of either of their component elements in the attainment of their ends. Only in the case when the two component elements which do not tend to the same end are

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evil is the participant better than either. Now, if philosophy and political action are both good, but tend to different ends, and they participate in both, and are in a mean between them, then they are talking nonsense, for they are worse than either; or, if the one be good and the other evil, they are better than the one and worse than the other; only on the supposition that they are both evil could there be any truth in what they say. I do not think that they will admit that their two pursuits are either wholly or partly evil; but the truth is, that these philosopher-politicians who aim at both fall short of both in the attainment of their respective ends, and are really third, although they would like to stand first. There is no need, however, to be angry at this ambition of theirs—which may be forgiven; for every man ought to be loved who says and manfully pursues and works out anything which is at all like wisdom: at the same time we shall do well to see them as they really are.

Crito wants to educate one of his sons, but the teachers of philosophy are such strange beings that he cannot trust him to them.

Cri. I have often told you, Socrates, that I am in a constant difficulty about my two sons. What am I to do with them? There is no hurry about the younger one, who is only a child; but the other, Critobulus, is getting on, and needs some one who will improve him. I cannot help thinking, when I hear you talk, that there is a sort of madness in many of our anxieties about our children:—in the first place, about marrying a wife of good family to be the mother of them, and then about heaping up money for them—and yet taking no care about their education. But then again, when I contemplate any of those who pretend to educate others, I am amazed. To me, if I am to confess the truth, they all seem 30
to be such outrageous beings: so that I do not know how I can advise the youth to study philosophy.

Soc. Dear Crito, do you not know that in every profession the inferior sort are numerous and good for nothing, and the good are few and beyond all price: for example, are not gymnastic and rhetoric and money-making and the art of the general, noble arts?

Cri. Certainly they are, in my judgment.

Soc. Well, and do you not see that in each of these arts the many are ridiculous performers?

Cri. Yes, indeed, that is very true.

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Soc. And will you on this account shun all these pursuits yourself and refuse to allow them to your son?

Cri. That would not be reasonable, Socrates.

Soc. Do you then be reasonable, Crito, and do not mind whether the teachers of philosophy are good or bad, but think only of philosophy herself. Try and examine her well and truly, and if she be evil seek to turn away all men from her, and not your sons only; but if she be what I believe that she is, then follow her and serve her, you and your house, as the saying is, and be of good cheer.

Let him think, not of the goodness or badness of the teachers, but of the truth of philosophy.

CRATYLUS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Cratylus has always been a source of perplexity to the student of Plato. While in fancy and humour, and perfection of style and metaphysical originality, this dialogue may be ranked with the best of the Platonic writings, there has been an uncertainty about the motive of the piece, which interpreters have hitherto not succeeded in dispelling. We need not suppose that Plato used words in order to conceal his thoughts, or that he would have been unintelligible to an educated contemporary. In the Phaedrus and Euthydemus we also find a difficulty in determining the precise aim of the author. Plato wrote satires in the form of dialogues, and his meaning, like that of other satirical writers, has often slept in the ear of posterity. Two causes may be assigned for this obscurity: 1st, the subtlety and allusiveness of this species of composition; 2nd, the difficulty of reproducing a state of life and literature which has passed away. A satire is unmeaning unless we can place ourselves back among the persons and thoughts of the age in which it was written. Had the treatise of Antisthenes upon words, or the speculations of Cratylus, or some other Heracleitean of the fourth century B.C., on the nature of language been preserved to us; or if we had lived at the time, and been 'rich enough to attend the fifty-drachma course of Prodicus' (384 B), we should have understood Plato better, and many points which are now attributed to the extravagance of Socrates' humour would have been found, like the allusions of Aristophanes in the Clouds, to have gone home to the sophists and grammarians of the day.

For the age was very busy with philological speculation; and many questions were beginning to be asked about language which were parallel to other questions about justice, virtue, knowledge, and were illustrated in a similar manner by the analogy of the

arts. Was there a correctness in words, and were they given by nature or convention? In the presocratic philosophy mankind had been striving to attain an expression of their ideas; and now they were beginning to ask themselves whether the expression might not be distinguished from the idea? They were also seeking to distinguish the parts of speech and to enquire into the relation of subject and predicate. Grammar and logic were moving about somewhere in the depths of the human soul, but they were not yet awakened into consciousness and had not found names for themselves, or terms by which they might be expressed. Of these beginnings of the study of language we know little, and there necessarily arises an obscurity when the surroundings of such a work as the Cratylus are taken away. Moreover, in this, as in most of the dialogues of Plato, allowance has to be made for the character of Socrates. For the theory of language can only be propounded by him in a manner which is consistent with his own profession of ignorance. Hence his ridicule of the new school of etymology is interspersed with many declarations, 'that he knows nothing,' 'that he has learned from Euthyphro,' and the like. Even the truest things which he says are depreciated by himself. He professes to be guessing, but the guesses of Plato are better than all the other theories of the ancients respecting language put together.

The dialogue hardly derives any light from Plato's other writings, and still less from Scholiasts and Neoplatonist writers. Socrates must be interpreted from himself, and on first reading we certainly have a difficulty in understanding his drift, or his relation to the two other interlocutors in the dialogue. Does he agree with Cratylus or with Hermogenes, and is he serious in those fanciful etymologies, extending over more than half the dialogue, which he seems so greatly to relish? Or is he serious in part only; and can we separate his jest from his earnest?—*Sunt bona, sunt quaedam mediocria, sunt mala plura.* Most of them are ridiculously bad, and yet among them are found, as if by accident, principles of philology which are unsurpassed in any ancient writer, and even in advance of any philologer of the last century. May we suppose that Plato, like Lucian, has been amusing his fancy by writing a comedy in the form of a prose dialogue? And what is the final result of the enquiry? Is Plato an upholder of the con-

ventional theory of language, which he acknowledges to be imperfect? or does he mean to imply that a perfect language can only be based on his own theory of ideas? Or if this latter explanation is refuted by his silence, then in what relation does his account of language stand to the rest of his philosophy? Or may we be so bold as to deny the connexion between them? [For the allusion to the ideas at the end of the dialogue (439 C) is merely intended to show that we must not put words in the place of things or realities, which is a thesis strongly insisted on by Plato in many other passages] . . . These are some of the first thoughts which arise in the mind of the reader of the Cratylus. And the consideration of them may form a convenient introduction to the general subject of the dialogue.

We must not expect all the parts of a dialogue of Plato to tend equally to some clearly-defined end. His idea of literary art is not the absolute proportion of the whole, such as we appear to find in a Greek temple or statue; nor should his works be tried by any such standard. They have often the beauty of poetry, but they have also the freedom of conversation. 'Words are more plastic than wax' (Rep. 588 D), and may be moulded into any form. He wanders on from one topic to another, careless of the unity of his work, not fearing any 'judge, or spectator, who may recall him to the point' (Theaet. 173 C), 'whither the argument blows we follow' (Rep. 394 D). To have determined beforehand, as in a modern didactic treatise, the nature and limits of the subject, would have been fatal to the spirit of enquiry or discovery, which is the soul of the dialogue. . . . These remarks are applicable to nearly all the works of Plato, but to the Cratylus and Phaedrus more than any others. See Phaedrus, Introduction, *sub init.*

There is another aspect under which some of the dialogues of Plato may be more truly viewed: — they are dramatic sketches of an argument. We have found that in the Lysis, Charmides, Laches, Protagoras, Meno, we arrived at no conclusion — the different sides of the argument were personified in the different speakers; but the victory was not distinctly attributed to any of them, nor the truth wholly the property of any. And in the Cratylus we have no reason to assume that Socrates is either wholly right or wholly wrong, or that Plato, though he evidently inclines to him, had any other aim than that of personifying, in

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the characters of Hermogenes, Socrates, and Cratylus, the three theories of language which are respectively maintained by them.

The two subordinate persons of the dialogue, Hermogenes and Cratylus, are at the opposite poles of the argument. But after a while the disciple of the Sophist and the follower of Heracleitus are found to be not so far removed from one another as at first sight appeared; and both show an inclination to accept the third view which Socrates interposes between them. First, Hermogenes, the poor brother of the rich Callias, expounds the doctrine that names are conventional; like the names of slaves, they may be given and altered at pleasure. This is one of those principles which, whether applied to society or language, explains everything and nothing. For in all things there is an element of convention; but the admission of this does not help us to understand the rational ground or basis in human nature on which the convention proceeds. Socrates first of all intimates to Hermogenes that his view of language is only a part of a sophistical whole, and ultimately tends to abolish the distinction between truth and falsehood. Hermogenes is very ready to throw aside the sophistical tenet, and listens with a sort of half admiration, half belief, to the speculations of Socrates.

Cratylus is of opinion that a name is either a true name or not a name at all. He is unable to conceive of degrees of imitation; a word is either the perfect expression of a thing, or a mere inarticulate sound (a fallacy which is still prevalent among theorizers about the origin of language). He is at once a philosopher and a sophist; for while wanting to rest language on an immutable basis, he would deny the possibility of falsehood. He is inclined to derive all truth from language, and in language he sees reflected the philosophy of Heracleitus. His views are not like those of Hermogenes, hastily taken up, but are said to be the result of mature consideration, although he is described as still a young man. With a tenacity characteristic of the Heracleitean philosophers, he clings to the doctrine of the flux. (Cp. Theaet. 180.) Of the real Cratylus we know nothing, except that he is recorded by Aristotle to have been the friend or teacher of Plato; nor have we any proof that he resembled the likeness of him in Plato any more than the Critias of Plato is like the real Critias, or the Euthyphro

in this dialogue like the other Euthyphro, the diviner, in the dialogue which is called after him.

Between these two extremes, which have both of them a sophistical character, the view of Socrates is introduced, which is in a manner the union of the two. Language is conventional and also natural, and the true conventional-natural is the rational. It is a work not of chance, but of art; the dialectician is the artificer of words, and the legislator gives authority to them. They are the expressions or imitations in sound of things. In a sense, Cratylus is right in saying that things have by nature names (p. 390); for nature is not opposed either to art or to law. But vocal imitation, like any other copy, may be imperfectly executed; and in this way an element of chance or convention enters in. There is much which is accidental or exceptional in language. Some words have had their original meaning so obscured, that they require to be helped out by convention. But still the true name is that which has a natural meaning. Thus nature, art, chance, all combine in the formation of language. And the three views respectively propounded by Hermogenes, Socrates, Cratylus, may be described as the conventional, the artificial or rational, and the natural. The view of Socrates is the meeting-point of the other two, just as conceptualism is the meeting-point of nominalism and realism.

We can hardly say that Plato was aware of the truth, that 'languages are not made, but grow.' But still, when he says that 'the legislator made language with the dialectician standing on his right hand' (390 D), we need not infer from this that he conceived words, like coins, to be issued from the mint of the State. The creator of laws and of social life is naturally regarded as the creator of language, according to Hellenic notions, and the philosopher is his natural adviser. We are not to suppose that the legislator is performing any extraordinary function; he is merely the Eponymus of the State, who prescribes rules for the dialectician and for all other artists. According to a truly Platonic mode of approaching the subject, language, like virtue in the Republic, is examined by the analogy of the arts. Words are works of art which may be equally made in different materials, and are well made when they have a meaning. Of the process which he thus describes, Plato had probably no very definite notion. But he means to express

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generally that language is the product of intelligence, and that languages belong to States and not to individuals.

A better conception of language could not have been formed in Plato's age, than that which he attributes to Socrates. Yet many persons have thought that the mind of Plato is more truly seen in the vague realism of Cratylus. This misconception has probably arisen from two causes: first, the desire to bring Plato's theory of language into accordance with the received doctrine of the Platonic ideas; secondly, the impression created by Socrates himself, that he is not in earnest, and is only indulging the fancy of the hour.

1. We shall have occasion to show more at length, in the Introduction to future dialogues, that the so-called Platonic ideas are only a semi-mythical form, in which he attempts to realize abstractions, and that they are replaced in his later writings by a rational theory of psychology. (See Introductions to the Meno and the Sophist.) And in the Cratylus he gives a general account of the nature and origin of language, in which Adam Smith, Rousseau, and other writers of the last century, would have substantially agreed. At the end of the dialogue, he speaks as in the Symposium and Republic of absolute beauty and good; but he never supposed that they were capable of being embodied in words. Of the names of the ideas, he would have said, as he says of the names of the Gods, that we know nothing. Even the realism of Cratylus is not based upon the ideas of Plato, but upon the flux of Heracleitus. Here, as in the Sophist and Politicus, Plato expressly draws attention to the want of agreement in words and things. Hence we are led to infer, that the view of Socrates is not the less Plato's own, because not based upon the ideas; 2nd, that Plato's theory of language is not inconsistent with the rest of his philosophy.

2. We do not deny that Socrates is partly in jest and partly in earnest. He is discoursing in a high-flown vein, which may be compared to the 'dithyrambics of the Phaedrus.' They are mysteries of which he is speaking, and he professes a kind of ludicrous fear of his imaginary wisdom. When he is arguing out of Homer, about the names of Hector's son, or when he describes himself as inspired or maddened by Euthyphro, with whom he has been sitting from the early dawn (cp. Phaedrus and Lysias;

Phaedr.) and expresses his intention of yielding to the illusion to-day, and to-morrow he will go to a priest and be purified, we easily see that his words are not to be taken seriously. In this part of the dialogue his dread of committing impiety, the pretended derivation of his wisdom from another, the extravagance of some of his etymologies, and, in general, the manner in which the fun, fast and furious, *vires acquirit eundo*, remind us strongly of the Phaedrus. The jest is a long one, extending over more than half the dialogue. But then, we remember that the Euthydemus is a still longer jest, in which the irony is preserved to the very end. There he is parodying the ingenious follies of early logic; in the Cratylus he is ridiculing the fancies of a new school of sophists and grammarians. The fallacies of the Euthydemus are still retained at the end of our logic books; and the etymologies of the Cratylus have also found their way into later writers. Some of these are not much worse than the conjectures of Hemsterhuis, and other critics of the last century; but this does not prove that they are serious. For Plato is in advance of his age in his conception of language, as much as he is in his conception of mythology. (Cp. Phaedrus sub initio.)

When the fervour of his etymological enthusiasm has abated, Socrates ends, as he has begun, with a rational explanation of language. Still he preserves his 'know nothing' disguise, and himself declares his first notions about names to be reckless and ridiculous. Having explained compound words by resolving them into their original elements, he now proceeds to analyse simple words into the letters of which they are composed. The Socrates who 'knows nothing,' here passes into the teacher, the dialectician, the arranger of species. There is nothing in this part of the dialogue which is either weak or extravagant. Plato is a supporter of the Onomatopoetic theory of language; that is to say, he supposes words to be formed by the imitation of ideas in sounds; he also recognises the effect of time, the influence of foreign languages, the desire of euphony, to be formative principles; and he admits a certain element of chance. But he gives no intimation in all this that he is preparing the way for the construction of an ideal language, or that he has any Eleatic speculation to oppose to the Heracleiteanism of Cratylus.

The theory of language which is propounded in the Cratylus is

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in accordance with the later phase of the philosophy of Plato, and would have been regarded by him as in the main true. The dialogue is also a satire on the philological fancies of the day. Socrates in pursuit of his vocation as a detector of false knowledge, lights by accident on the truth. He is guessing, he is dreaming; he has heard, as he says in the Phaedrus, from another: no one is more surprised than himself at his own discoveries. And yet some of his best remarks, as for example his view of the derivation of Greek words from other languages, or of the permutations of letters, or again, his observation that in speaking of the Gods we are only speaking of our names of them, occur among these flights of humour.

We can imagine a character having a profound insight into the nature of men and things, and yet hardly dwelling upon them seriously; blending inextricably sense and nonsense; sometimes enveloping in a blaze of jests the most serious matters, and then again allowing the truth to peer through; enjoying the flow of his own humour, and puzzling mankind by an ironical exaggeration of their absurdities. Such were Aristophanes and Rabelais; such, in a different style, were Sterne, Jean Paul, Hamann,—writers who sometimes become unintelligible through the extravagance of their fancies. Such is the character which Plato intends to depict in some of his dialogues as the Silenus Socrates; and through this medium we have to receive our theory of language.

There remains a difficulty which seems to demand a more exact answer In what relation does the satirical or etymological portion of the dialogue stand to the serious? Granting all that can be said about the provoking irony of Socrates, about the parody of Euthyphro, or Prodicus, or Antisthenes, how does the long catalogue of etymologies furnish any answer to the question of Hermogenes, which is evidently the main thesis of the dialogue: What is the truth, or correctness, or principle of names?

After illustrating the nature of correctness by the analogy of the arts, and then, as in the Republic, ironically appealing to the authority of the Homeric poems, Socrates shows that the truth or correctness of names can only be ascertained by an appeal to etymology. The truth of names is to be found in the analysis of their elements. But why does he admit etymologies which are

absurd, based on Heracleitean fancies, fourfold interpretations of words, impossible unions and separations of syllables and letters?

1. The answer to this difficulty has been already anticipated in part: Socrates is not a dogmatic teacher, and therefore he puts on this wild and fanciful disguise, in order that the truth may be permitted to appear: 2. as Benfey remarks, an erroneous example may illustrate a principle of language as well as a true one: 3. many of these etymologies, as, for example, that of *δίκαιον*, are indicated, by the manner in which Socrates speaks of them, to have been current in his own age: 4. the philosophy of language had not made such progress as would have justified Plato in propounding real derivations. Like his master Socrates, he saw through the hollowness of the incipient sciences of the day, and tries to move in a circle apart from them, laying down the conditions under which they are to be pursued, but, as in the Timaeus, cautious and tentative, when he is speaking of actual phenomena. To have made etymologies seriously, would have seemed to him like the interpretation of the myths in the Phaedrus, the task 'of a not very fortunate individual, who had a great deal of time on his hands.' (See p. 259.) The irony of Socrates places him above and beyond the errors of his contemporaries.

The Cratylus is full of humour and satirical touches; the inspiration which comes from Euthyphro, and his prancing steeds, the light admixture of quotations from Homer, and the spurious dialectic which is applied to them; the jest about the fifty-drachma course of Prodicus, which is declared on the best authority, viz. his own, to be a complete education in grammar and rhetoric (384 B); the double explanation of the name Hermogenes, either as 'not being in luck,' or 'being no speaker' (384 C, 408 B); the dearly-bought wisdom of Callias, the Lacedaemonian whose name was 'Rush' and, above all, the pleasure which Socrates expresses in his own dangerous discoveries, which 'to-morrow he will purge away' (396 E), are truly humorous. While delivering a lecture on the philosophy of language, Socrates is also satirizing the endless fertility of the human mind in spinning arguments out of nothing, and employing the most trifling and fanciful analogies in support of a theory. Etymology in ancient as in modern times was a favourite recreation; and Socrates makes merry at the expense of the etymologists. The simplicity of Hermogenes, who is ready to believe anything

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that he is told, heightens the effect. (See especially 392 E; 395 A; 397 D.) Socrates in his genial and ironical mood hits right and left at his adversaries; *Οὐρανὸς* is so called *ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁρᾶν τὰ ἄνω*, 'which, as some philosophers say, is the way to have a pure mind' (396 C); the sophists are by a fanciful explanation converted into heroes (398 D); 'the givers of names were like some philosophers who fancy that the earth goes round because their heads are always going round' (411 B, 439 C). There is a great deal of 'mischief' lurking in the following: 'I found myself in greater perplexity about justice than I was before I began to learn' (413 C); 'The *ῥ* in *κάτοπτρον* must be the addition of some one who cares nothing about truth, but thinks only of putting the mouth into shape' (414 C); 'Tales and falsehoods have generally to do with the Tragic and goatish life, and tragedy is the place of them' (408 C). Several philosophers and sophists are mentioned by name: first, Protagoras and Euthydemus are assailed; then the interpreters of Homer, *οἱ παλαιοὶ Ὁμηρικοὶ* (cp. Arist. Met. xiii. 6, 7) and the Orphic poets are alluded to by the way; then he discovers a hive of wisdom in the philosophy of Heracleitus; — the doctrine of the flux is contained in the word *οὐσία* (= *ὠσία* the pushing principle), an anticipation of Anaxagoras is found in *ψυχὴ* and *σελήνη*. Again, he ridicules the arbitrary methods of pulling out and putting in letters which were in vogue among the philologers of his time; or slightly scoffs at contemporary religious beliefs. Lastly, he is impatient of hearing from the half-converted Cratylus the doctrine that falsehood can neither be spoken, nor uttered, nor addressed; a piece of sophistry attributed to Gorgias, which reappears in the Sophist (261 C). And he proceeds to demolish, with no less delight than he had set up, the Heracleitean theory of language.

In the latter part of the dialogue Socrates becomes more serious, though he does not lay aside but rather aggravates his banter of the Heracleiteans, whom here, as in the Theaetetus, he delights to ridicule. What was the origin of this enmity we can hardly determine: — was it due to the natural dislike which may be supposed to exist between the 'patrons of the flux' and the 'friends of the ideas' (Soph. 248 A)? or is it to be attributed to the indignation which Plato felt at having wasted his time upon 'Cratylus and the doctrines of Heracleitus' in the days of his youth? Socrates, touching on some of the characteristic difficulties of

early Greek philosophy, endeavours to show Cratylus that imitation may be partial or imperfect, that a knowledge of things is higher than a knowledge of names, and that there can be no knowledge if all things are in a state of transition. But Cratylus, who does not easily apprehend the argument from common sense, remains unconvinced, and on the whole inclines to his former opinion. Some profound philosophical remarks are scattered up and down, admitting of an application not only to language but to knowledge generally; such as the assertion that 'consistency is no test of truth' (436 D, foll.): or again, 'If we are over-precise about words, truth will say "too late" to us as to the belated traveller in Ægina' (433 E).

The place of the dialogue in the series cannot be determined with certainty. The style and subject, and the treatment of the character of Socrates, have a close resemblance to the earlier dialogues, especially to the Phaedrus and Euthydemus. The manner in which the ideas are spoken of at the end of the dialogue, also indicates a comparatively early date. The imaginative element is still in full vigour; the Socrates of the Cratylus is the Socrates of the Apology and Symposium, not yet Platonized; and he describes, as in the Theaetetus, the philosophy of Heracleitus by 'unsavoury' similes — he cannot believe that the world is like 'a leaky vessel,' or 'a man who has a running at the nose' (440 C); he attributes the flux of the world to the swimming in some folks' heads. On the other hand, the relation of thought to language is omitted here, but is treated of in the Sophist. These grounds are not sufficient to enable us to arrive at a precise conclusion. But we shall not be far wrong in placing the Cratylus about the middle, or at any rate in the first half, of the series.

eph. Cratylus, the Heracleitean philosopher, and Hermogenes, the
3 brother of Callias, have been arguing about names; the former maintaining that they are natural, the latter that they are conventional. Cratylus affirms that his own is a true name, but will not allow that the name of Hermogenes is equally true. Hermogenes
4 asks Socrates to explain to him what Cratylus means; or, far rather, he would like to know, What Socrates himself thinks about the truth or correctness of names? Socrates replies, that

hard is knowledge, and the nature of names is a considerable part of knowledge: he has never been to hear the fifty-drachma course of Prodicus; and having only attended the single-drachma course, he is not competent to give an opinion on such matters. When Cratylus denies that Hermogenes is a true name, he supposes him to mean that he is not a true son of Hermes, because he is never in luck. But he would like to have an open council and to hear both sides.

Hermogenes is of opinion that there is no principle in names; they may be changed, as we change the names of slaves, whenever we please, and the altered name is as good as the original one.

You mean to say, for instance, rejoins Socrates, that if I agree 38
to call a man a horse, then a man will be rightly called a horse by me, and a man by the rest of the world? But, surely, there is in words a true and a false, as there are true and false propositions. If a whole proposition be true or false, then the parts of a proposition may be true or false, and the least parts as well as the greatest; and the least parts are names, and therefore names may be true or false. Would Hermogenes maintain that anybody may give a name to anything, and as many names as he pleases; and would all these names be always true at the time of giving them? Hermogenes replies that this is the only way in which he can conceive that names are correct; and he appeals to the practice of different nations, and of the different Hellenic tribes, in confirmation of his view. Socrates asks, whether the things differ as the words which represent them differ: — Are we to maintain with 38
Protagoras, that what appears is? Hermogenes has always been puzzled about this, but acknowledges, when he is pressed by Socrates, that there are a few very good men in the world, and a great many very bad; and the very good are the wise, and the very bad are the foolish; and this is not mere appearance but reality. Nor is he disposed to say with Euthydemus, that all things equally and always belong to all men; in that case, again, there would be no distinction between bad and good men. But then, the only remaining possibility is, that all things have their several distinct natures, and are independent of our notions about them. And not only things, but actions, have distinct natures, and are done by different processes. There is a natural way of 3

cutting or burning, and a natural instrument with which men cut or burn, and any other way will fail;—this is true of all actions. And speaking is a kind of action, and naming is a kind of speaking, and we must name according to a natural process, and with a proper instrument. We cut with a knife, we pierce with an awl,
388 we weave with a shuttle, we name with a name. And as a shuttle separates the warp from the woof, so a name distinguishes the natures of things. The weaver will use the shuttle well,—that is, like a weaver; and the teacher will use the name well,—that is, like a teacher. The shuttle will be made by the carpenter; the awl by the smith or skilled person. But who makes a name? Does not the law give names, and does not the teacher receive
389 them from the legislator? He is the skilled person who makes them, and of all skilled workmen he is the rarest. But how does the carpenter make or repair the shuttle, and to what will he look? Will he not look at the ideal which he has in his mind? And as the different kinds of work differ, so ought the instruments which make them to differ. The several kinds of shuttles ought to answer in material and form to the several kinds of webs. And the
390 legislator ought to know the different materials and forms of which names are made in Hellas and other countries. But who is to be the judge of the proper form? The judge of shuttles is the weaver who uses them; the judge of lyres is the player of the lyre; the judge of ships is the pilot. And will not the judge who is able to direct the legislator in his work of naming, be he who knows how to use the names—he who can ask and answer questions—in short, the dialectician? The pilot directs the carpenter how to make the rudder, and the dialectician directs the legislator how he is to impose names; for to express the ideal forms of things in syllables and letters is not the easy task, Hermogenes, which you imagine.

391 'I should be more readily persuaded, if you would show me this natural correctness of names.'

Indeed I cannot; but I see that you have advanced; for you now admit that there is a correctness of names, and that not every one can give a name. But what is the nature of this correctness or truth, you must learn from the Sophists, of whom your brother Callias has bought his reputation for wisdom rather dearly; and since they require to be paid, you, having no money, had better

learn from him at second-hand. 'Well, but I have just given up Protagoras, and I should be inconsistent in going to learn of him.' Then if you reject him you may learn of the poets, and in particular of Homer, who distinguishes the names given by Gods and men to the same things, as in the verse about the river God who fought with Hephaestus, 'whom the Gods call Xanthus, and men 39
call Scamander;' or in the lines in which he mentions the bird which the Gods call 'Chalcis,' and men 'Cymindis;' or the hill which men call 'Batieia,' and the Gods 'Myrina's Tomb.' Here is an important lesson; for the Gods must of course be right in their use of names. And this is not the only truth about philology which may be learnt from Homer. Does he not say that Hector's son had two names —

'Hector called him Scamandrius, but the others Astyanax'?

Now, if the men called him Astyanax, is it not probable that the other name was conferred by the women? And which are more likely to be right — the wiser or the less wise, the men or the women? Homer evidently agreed with the men: and of the name given by them he offers an explanation; — the boy was called Astyanax ('king of the city'), because his father saved the city. The names Astyanax and Hector, moreover, are really the same, — the one means a king, and the other is 'a 39
holder or possessor.' For as the lion's whelp may be called a lion, or the horse's foal a foal, so the son of a king may be called a king. But if the horse had produced a calf, then that would be called a calf. Whether the syllables of a name are the same or not makes no difference, provided the meaning is retained. For example; the names of letters, whether vowels or consonants, do not correspond to their sounds, with the exception of ε, υ, ο, ω. The name Beta has three letters added to the sound — and yet this does not alter the sense of the word, or prevent the whole name having the value which the legislator intended. And the same 39
may be said of a king and the son of a king, who like other animals resemble each other in the course of nature; the words by which they are signified may be disguised, and yet amid differences of sound the etymologist may recognise the same notion, just as the physician recognises the power of the same drugs under different disguises of colour and smell. Hector and

Astyanax have only one letter alike, but they have the same meaning; and Agis (leader) is altogether different in sound from Polemarchus (chief in war), or Eupolemus (good warrior); but the two words present the same idea of leader or general, like the words Iatrocles and Acesimbrotus, which equally denote a physician. The son succeeds the father as the foal succeeds the horse; but when, out of the course of nature, a prodigy occurs, and the offspring no longer resembles the parent, then the names no
95 longer agree. This may be illustrated by the case of Agamemnon and his son Orestes, of whom the former has a name significant of his patience at the siege of Troy; while the name of the latter indicates his savage, man-of-the-mountain nature. Atreus again, for his murder of Chrysippus, and his cruelty to Thyestes, is rightly named Atreus, which, to the eye of the etymologist, is *ἀτηρὸς* (destructive), *ἀτειρὴς* (stubborn), *ἄτρεστος* (fearless); and Pelops is *ὁ τὰ πέλας ὁρῶν* (he who sees what is near only), because in his eagerness to win Hippodamia, he was unconscious of the remoter consequences which the murder of Myrtilus would entail upon his race. The name Tantalus, if slightly changed, offers two etymologies; either *ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ λίθου ταλαντείας*, or *ἀπὸ τοῦ ταλάντατον εἶναι*, signifying at once the hanging of the stone over his head in the world below, and the misery which he brought upon his country.
96 And the name of his father, Zeus, Διὸς, Ζηνὸς, has an excellent meaning, though hard to be understood, because really a sentence which is divided into two parts (Ζεὺς, Διός). For he, being the lord and king of all, is the author of our being, and in him all live: this is implied in the double form, Διὸς, Ζηνὸς, which being put together and interpreted is *δι' ὃν ζῇ πάντα*. There may, at first sight, appear to be some irreverence in calling him the son of Cronos, who is a proverb for stupidity; but the meaning is that Zeus himself is the son of a mighty intellect; Κρόνος, quasi *κόρος*, not in the sense of a youth, but quasi *τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀκήρατον τοῦ νοῦ* —the pure and garnished mind, which in turn is begotten of Uranus, who is so called *ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁρᾶν τὰ ἄνω*, from looking upwards; which, as philosophers say, is the way to have a pure mind. The earlier portion of Hesiod's genealogy has escaped my memory, or I would try more conclusions of the same sort. 'You talk like an oracle.' I caught the infection from Euthyphro, who gave me a long lecture which began at dawn, and has not only entered into my

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ears, but filled my soul, and my intention is to yield to the inspiration to-day; and to-morrow I will be exorcised by some priest or sophist. 'Go on; I am anxious to hear the rest.' Now that we have a general notion, how shall we proceed? What names will afford the most crucial test of natural fitness? Those of heroes and ordinary men are often deceptive, because they are patronymics or expressions of a wish; let us try gods and demi-gods. Gods are so called, *ἀπὸ τοῦ θεῖν*, from the verb 'to run;' because the sun, moon, and stars run about the heaven; and they being the original gods of the Hellenes, as they still are of the Barbarians, their name is given to all Gods. The demons are the golden race of Hesiod, and by golden he means not literally golden, but good; and they are called demons, quasi *δαήμονες*, which in old Attic was used for *δαίμονες* — good men are well said to become *δαίμονες* when they die, because they are knowing. Ἥρως is the same word as *ἐρως*: 'the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair;' or perhaps they were a species of sophists or rhetoricians, and so called *ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐρωτᾶν*, or *εἴρειν*, from their habit of spinning questions; for *εἴρειν* is equivalent to *λέγειν*. I get all this from Euthyphro; and now a new and ingenious idea comes into my mind, and, if I am not careful, I shall be wiser than I ought to be by to-morrow's dawn. My idea is, that we may put in and pull out letters at pleasure and alter the accents (as, for example, *Διὶ φίλος* may be turned into *Δίφιλος*), and we may make words into sentences and sentences into words. The name *ἄνθρωπος* is a case in point, for a letter has been omitted and the accent changed; the original meaning being *ὁ ἀναθρῶν ἃ ὄπωπεν* — he who looks up at what he sees. *Ψυχὴ* may be thought to be the reviving, or refreshing, or animating principle — *ἡ ἀναψύχουσα τὸ σῶμα*; but I am afraid that Euthyphro and his disciples will scorn this derivation, and I must find another: shall we identify the soul with the 'ordering mind' of Anaxagoras, and say that *ψυχὴ*, quasi *φυσέχη* = *ἡ φύσιν ἔχει* or *ὀχεῖ*? — this might easily be refined into *ψυχή*. 'That is a more artistic etymology.'

After *ψυχὴ* follows *σῶμα*; this, by a slight permutation, may be either = (1) the 'grave' of the soul, or (2) may mean 'that by which the soul signifies (*σημαίνει*) her wishes.' But more probably, the word is Orphic, and simply denotes that the body is the place of ward in which the soul suffers the penalty of sin,— *ἐν ᾧ σώζεται*.

'I should like to hear some more explanations of the names of the Gods, like that excellent one of Zeus.' The truest names of the Gods are those which they give themselves; but these are unknown to us. Less true are those by which we propitiate them, as men say in prayers, 'May he graciously receive any name by which I call him.' And to avoid offence, I should like to let them
401 know beforehand that we are not presuming to enquire about them, but only about the names which they usually bear. Let us begin with Hestia. What did he mean who gave the name Hestia? 'That is a very difficult question.' O, my dear Hermogenes, I believe that there was a power of philosophy and talk among the first inventors of names, both in our own and in other languages; for even in foreign words a principle is discernible. Hestia is the same with *ἐσία*, which is an old form of *οὐσία*, and means the first principle of things: this agrees with the fact that to Hestia the first sacrifices are offered. There is also another reading — *ὠσία*, which implies that 'pushing' (*ὠθοῦν*) is the first
402 principle of all things. And here I seem to discover a delicate allusion to the flux of Heracleitus — that antediluvian philosopher who cannot walk twice in the same stream; and this flux of his may accomplish yet greater marvels. For the names Cronos and Rhea cannot have been accidental; the giver of them must have known something about the doctrine of Heracleitus. Moreover, there is a remarkable coincidence in the words of Homer, when he speaks of Oceanus, 'the origin of Gods;' and in the verse of Orpheus, in which he describes Oceanus espousing his sister Tethys. Tethys is nothing more than the name of a spring — *τὸ διαττώμενον καὶ ἠθούμενον*. Poseidon is *ποσίδεσμος*, the chain of the feet, because you cannot walk on the sea — the *ε* is inserted by way of ornament; or perhaps the name may have been originally
403 *πολλείδων*, meaning, that the God knew many things (*πολλὰ εἰδώς*): he may also be the shaker, *ἀπὸ τοῦ σείειν*,— in this case, *π* and *δ* have been added. Pluto is connected with *πλοῦτος*, because wealth comes out of the earth; or the word may be a euphemism for Hades, which is usually derived *ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀειδοῦς*, because the God is concerned with the invisible. But the name Hades was really given him from his knowing (*εἰδέναι*) all good things. Men in general are foolishly afraid of him, and talk with horror of the world below from which no one may return. The reason why his

subjects never wish to come back, even if they could, is that the God enchains them by the strongest of spells, namely by the desire of virtue, which they hope to obtain by constant association with him. He is the perfect and accomplished Sophist and the great benefactor of the other world; for he has much more than he wants there, and hence he is called Pluto or the rich. He will have nothing to do with the souls of men while in the body, because he cannot work his will with them so long as they are confused and entangled by fleshly lusts. Demeter is the mother and giver of food — *ἡ διδοῦσα μήτηρ τῆς ἐδωδῆς*. Herè is *ἐρατή τις*, or perhaps the legislator may have been thinking of the weather, and has merely transposed the letters of the word *ἀήρ*. Pherephatta, that word of awe, is *φερεπάφα*, which is only an euphonious contraction of *ἡ τοῦ φερομένου ἐφαπτομένη*,— all things are in motion, and she in her wisdom moves with them, and the wise God Hades consorts with her — there is nothing very terrible in this, any more than in her other appellation Persephone, which is also significant of her wisdom (*σοφή*). Apollo is another name, which is supposed to have some dreadful meaning, but is susceptible of at least four perfectly innocent explanations. First, he is the purifier or purger or absolver (*ἀπολούων*); secondly, he is the true diviner, *Ἀπλῶς*, as he is called in the Thessalian dialect (*ἀπλῶς* = *ἁπλοῦς*, sincere); thirdly, he is the archer (*ἀεὶ βάλλων*), always shooting; or again, supposing *α* to mean *ἅμα* or *ὁμου*, Apollo becomes equivalent to *ἁμα πολῶν*, which points to both his musical and his heavenly attributes; for there is a 'moving together' alike in music and in the harmony of the spheres. The second *λ* is inserted in order to avoid the ill-omened sound of destruction. The Muses are so called — *ἀπὸ τοῦ μῶσθαι*. The gentle Leto or Letho is named from her willingness (*ἐθελήμων*), or because she is ready to forgive and forget (*λήθη*). Artemis is so called from her healthy well-balanced nature, *διὰ τὸ ἀρτεμὲς*, or as *ἀρετῆς ἴστωρ*; or as a lover of virginity, *ἄροτον μισήσασα*. One of these explanations is probably true,— perhaps all of them. Dionysus is *ὁ διδοὺς τὸν οἶνον*, and *οἶνος* is quasi *οἰόνους* because wine makes those think (*οἴεσθαι*) that they have a mind (*νοῦς*) who have none. The established derivation of *Ἀφροδίτη διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀφροῦ γένεσιν* may be accepted on the authority of Hesiod. Again, there is the name of Pallas, or Athene, which we, who are Athenians, must not forget.

407 Pallas is derived from armed dances — *ἀπὸ τοῦ πάλλειν τὰ ὅπλα*. For Athene we must turn to the allegorical interpreters of Homer, who make the name equivalent to *θεονόη*, or possibly the word was originally *ἠθονόη* and signified moral intelligence (*ἐν ἤθει νόησις*). Hephaestus, again, is the lord of light — *ὁ τοῦ φάεος ἴστωρ*. This is a good notion; and, to prevent any other getting into our heads, let us go on to Ares. He is the manly one (*ἄρρην*), or the unchangeable one (*ἄρρατος*). Enough of the Gods; for, by the Gods, I am afraid of them; but if you suggest other words, you will see how the horses of Euthyphro prance. 'Only one more God; tell me about my godfather Hermes.' He is *ἑρμηνεύς*, the messenger or cheater or thief or bargainer; or *ὁ εἴρειν μώμενος*, that is, *εἰρέμης* 408 or *ἕρμης* — the speaker or contriver of speeches. 'Well said Cratylus, then, that I am no son of Hermes.' Pan, as the son of Hermes, is speech or the brother of speech, and is called Pan because speech indicates everything — *ὁ πᾶν μηνύων*. He has two forms, a true and a false; and is in the upper part smooth, and in the lower part shaggy. He is the goat of Tragedy, in which there are plenty of falsehoods.

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'Will you go on to the elements — sun, moon, stars, earth, aether, air, fire, water, seasons, years?' Very good: and which 409 shall I take first? Let us begin with *ἥλιος*, or the sun. The Doric form *ἅλιος* helps us to see that he is so called because at his rising he gathers (*ἁλίζει*) men together, or because he rolls about (*εἱλεῖ*) the earth, or because he variegates (*αἰολεῖ = ποικίλλει*) the earth. Selene is an anticipation of Anaxagoras, being a contraction of *σελαενονεοάεια*, the light (*σέλας*) which is ever old and new, and which, as Anaxagoras says, is borrowed from the sun; the name was harmonized into *σελαναία*, a form which is still in use. 'That is a true dithyrambic name.' Μεῖς is so called *ἀπὸ τοῦ μειοῦσθαι*, from suffering diminution, and *ἄστρον* is from *ἀστραπή* (lightning), which is an improvement of *ἀναστρωπή*, that which turns the eyes inside out. 'How do you explain *πῦρ* and *ὕδωρ*?' I suspect that 410 *πῦρ*, which, like *ὕδωρ* and *κύων*, is found in Phrygian, is a foreign word; for the Hellenes have borrowed much from the barbarians, and I always resort to this theory of a foreign origin when I am at a loss. *Ἀὴρ* may be explained, *ὅτι αἴρει τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς*; or, *ὅτι ἀεὶ ῥεῖ*; or, *ὅτι πνεῦμα ἐξ αὐτοῦ γίνεται* (compare the poetic word *ἀῆται*). So *αἰθὴρ* quasi *ἀειθερὴρ ὅτι ἀεὶ θεῖ περὶ τὸν ἀέρα*: *γῆ*, *γαῖα* quasi *γεννή-*

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τειρα (compare the Homeric form γεγάασι); ὥρα, or, according to the old Attic form, ὅρα, is derived ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁρίζειν, because it divides the year; ἐνιαυτὸς and ἔτος are the same thought — ὁ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἐτάζων, cut into two parts, ἐν ἑαυτῷ and ἐτάζων, like δι' ὃν ζῇ into Διὸς and Ζηνός.

'You make surprising progress.' True; I am run away with, and am not even yet at my utmost speed. 'I should like very much to hear your account of the virtues. What principle of 411
correctness is there in those charming words, wisdom, understanding, justice, and the rest?' To explain all that will be a serious business; still, as I have put on the lion's skin, appearances must be maintained. My opinion is, that primitive men were like some modern philosophers, who, by always going round in their search after the nature of things, become dizzy; and this phenomenon, which was really in themselves, they imagined to take place in the external world. You have no doubt remarked, that the doctrine of the universal flux, or generation of things, is indicated in names. 'No, I never did.' φρόνησις is only φορᾶς καὶ ῥοῦ νόησις, or perhaps φορᾶς ὄνησις, and in any case is connected with φέρεσθαι; γνώμη is γονῆς σκέψις καὶ νώμησις; νόησις is νέου or γιγνομένου ἔσις; the word νέος implies that creation is always going on — the original form was νεόεσις; σωφροσύνη is σωτηρία φρονήσεως; ἐπιστήμη is ἡ ἑπομένη τοῖς πράγμασιν — the faculty which 41
keeps close, neither anticipating nor lagging behind; σύνεσις is equivalent to συνιέναι, συμπορεύεσθαι τὴν ψυχήν, and is a kind of conclusion — συλλογισμός τις, akin therefore in idea to ἐπιστήμη; σοφία is very difficult, and has a foreign look — the meaning is, touching the motion or stream of things, and may be illustrated by the poetical ἐσύθη and the Lacedaemonian proper name Σοῦς, or Rush; ἀγαθὸν is τὸ ἀγαστὸν ἐν τῇ ταχύτητι,— for all things are in motion, and some are swifter than others: δικαιοσύνη is clearly ἡ τοῦ δικαίου σύνεσις. The word δίκαιον is more troublesome, and appears to mean the subtle penetrating power which, as the lovers of motion say, preserves all things, and is the cause of all things, quasi διαϊὸν going through — the letter κ being inserted for the sake of euphony. This is a great mystery which has been confided to 4
me; but when I ask for an explanation I am thought obtrusive, and another derivation is proposed to me. Justice is said to be ὁ καίων, or the sun; and when I joyfully repeat this beautiful notion,

I am answered, 'What, is there no justice when the sun is down?' And when I entreat my questioner to tell me his own opinion, he replies, that justice is fire in the abstract, or heat in the abstract; which is not very intelligible. Others laugh at such notions, and say with Anaxagoras, that justice is the ordering mind. 'I think that some one must have told you this.' And not the rest? Let me proceed then, in the hope of proving to you my
414 originality. Ἀνδρεία is quasi ἀνρεία quasi ἡ ἄνω ῥοὴ, the stream which flows upwards, and is opposed to injustice, which clearly hinders the principle of penetration; ἄρρην and ἀνὴρ have a similar derivation; γυνὴ is the same as γονή; θῆλυ is derived ἀπὸ τῆς θηλῆς, because the teat makes things flourish (τεθηλέναι), and the word θάλλειν itself implies increase of youth, which is swift and sudden ever (θεῖν and ἄλλεσθαι). I am getting over the ground fast: but much has still to be explained. There is τέχνη, for instance. This, by an aphaeresis of τ and an epenthesis of ο in two places, may be identified with ἐχονόη, and signifies 'that which has mind.'

'A very poor etymology.' Yes; but you must remember that all language is in process of change; letters are taken in and put out for the sake of euphony, and time is also a great alterer of words. For example, what business has the letter ρ in the word κάτοπτρον, or the letter σ in the word σφίγξ? The additions are often such that it is impossible to make out the original word; and yet, if you may put in and pull out, as you like, any name is equally good for any object. The fact is, that great dictators of literature like yourself should observe the rules of moderation. 'I will do my best.' But do not be too much of a precisian, or
415 you will paralyze me. If you will let me add μηχανὴ, ἀπὸ τοῦ μήκους, which means πολὺ, and ἀνειν, I shall be at the summit of my powers, from which elevation I will examine the two words κακία and ἀρετή. The first is easily explained in accordance with what has preceded; for all things being in a flux, κακία is τὸ κακῶς ἰόν. This derivation is illustrated by the word δειλία, which ought to have come after ἀνδρεία, and may be regarded as ὁ λίαν δεσμὸς τῆς ψυχῆς, just as ἀπορία signifies an impediment to motion (from α not, and πορεύεσθαι to go), and ἀρετὴ is εὐπορία, which is the opposite of this — the everflowing (ἀεὶ ῥέουσα or ἀειρετὴ), or the eligible, quasi αἱρετή. You will think that I am inventing, but I say that if

κακία is right, then ἀρετὴ is also right. But what is κακόν? That is 416
a very obscure word, to which I can only apply my old notion and
declare that κακὸν is a foreign word. Next, let us proceed to καλὸν,
αἰσχρόν. The latter is doubtless contracted from ἀεισχοροῦν, quasi
ἀεὶ ἴσχον ῥοῦν. The inventor of words being a patron of the flux,
was a great enemy to stagnation. Καλὸν is τὸ καλοῦν τὰ πράγματα —
this is mind (νοῦς or διάνοια); which is also the principle of
beauty; and which doing the works of beauty, is therefore
rightly called the beautiful. The meaning of συμφέρον is explained 417
by previous examples; — like ἐπιστήμη, signifying that the soul
moves in harmony with the world (σύμφορα, συμφέροντα). Κέρδος is
τὸ πᾶσι κεραννύμενον — that which mingles with all things: λυσιτελοῦν
is equivalent to τὸ τῆς φορᾶς λύον τὸ τέλος, and is not to be taken in
the vulgar sense of gainful, but rather in that of swift, being the
principle which makes motion immortal and unceasing; ὠφέλιμον
is ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀφέλλειν — that which gives increase: this word, which is
Homeric, is of foreign origin. Βλαβερὸν is τὸ βλάπτον or βουλόμενον
ἅπτειν τοῦ ῥοῦ — that which injures or seeks to bind the stream.
The proper word would be βουλαπτεροῦν, but this is too much of
a mouthful — like a prelude on the flute in honour of Athene. The 418
word ζημιῶδες is difficult; great changes, as I was saying, have
been made in words, and even a small change will alter their
meaning very much. The word δέον is one of these disguised
words. You know that according to the old pronunciation, which
is especially affected by the women, who are great conservatives,
ι and δ were used where we should now use η and ζ: for example,
what we now call ἡμέρα was formerly called ἰμέρα; and this shows
the meaning of the word to have been 'the desired one coming
after night,' and not, as is often supposed, 'that which makes things
gentle' (ἥμερα). So again, ζυγὸν is δυογὸν, quasi δέσις δυεῖν εἰς ἀγωγὴν
— the binding of two together for the purpose of drawing. Δέον, 419
as ordinarily written, has an evil sense, signifying the chain
(δεσμὸς) or hindrance of motion; but in its ancient form διὸν is
expressive of good, quasi διιόν, that which penetrates or goes
through all. Ζημιώδης is really δημιώδης, and means that which
binds motion (δοῦντι τὸ ἰόν): ἡδονὴ is ἡ πρὸς τὴν ὄνησιν τείνουσα πρᾶξις
— the δ is an insertion: λύπη is derived ἀπὸ τῆς διαλύσεως τοῦ σώ-
ματος: ἀνία is from α and ἰέναι, to go: ἀλγηδὼν is a foreign word,
and is so called ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀλγεινοῦ: ὀδυνὴ is ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνδύσεως τῆς λύπης:

ἀχθηδὼν is in its very sound a burden: χαρὰ expresses the flow of soul: τέρψις is ἀπὸ τοῦ τερπνοῦ, and τερπνὸν is properly ἔρπνον, because the sensation of pleasure is likened to a breath (πνοή) which creeps (ἕρπει) through the soul: εὐφροσύνη is named from φέρεσθαι, because the soul moves in harmony with nature: ἐπιθυμία is ἡ ἐπὶ τὸν θυμὸν ἴουσα δύναμις: θυμὸς is ἀπὸ τῆς θύσεως τῆς
420 ψυχῆς: ἵμερος — ὅτι ἱέμενος ῥεῖ ἡ ψυχή: πόθος, the desire which is in another place, ἀλλοθί που: ἔρως was anciently ἔσρος, and so called because it flows into (ἐσρεῖ) the soul from without: δόξα is ἡ δίωξις τοῦ εἰδέναι, or expresses the shooting from a bow (τόξον). The latter etymology is confirmed by the words βούλεσθαι, βουλή, ἀβουλία, which all have to do with shooting (βολή): and similarly οἴησις is nothing but the movement (οἶσις) of the soul towards essence. Ἑκούσιον is τὸ εἶκον — the yielding — ἀνάγκη is ἡ ἂν ἄγκη ἰοῦσα, the passage through ravines which impede motion: ἀληθεία is θεία
421 ἄλη, divine motion. Ψεῦδος is the opposite of this, implying the principle of constraint and forced repose, which is expressed under the figure of sleep, τὸ εὐδον; the ψ is an addition. Ὄνομα, a name, affirms the real existence of that which is sought after — ὂν οὐ μάσμα ἐστιν. Ὄν and οὐσία are only ἰὸν with an ι broken off; and οὐκ ὂν is οὐκ ἰόν. 'And what are ἰὸν, ῥέον, δοῦν?' One way of explaining them has been already suggested — they may be of foreign origin; and possibly this is the true answer. But mere antiquity may often prevent our recognizing words, after all the complications which they have undergone; and we must remember that however far we carry back our analysis some ultimate elements or roots will remain which can be no further analyzed. For example; the word ἀγαθὸς was supposed by us to
422 be a compound of ἀγαστὸς and θόος, and probably θόος may be further resolvable. But if we take a word of which no further resolution seems attainable, we may fairly conclude that we have reached one of these original elements, and the truth of such a word must be tested by some new method. Will you help me in the search?

All names, whether primary or secondary, are intended to show the nature of things; and the secondary, as I conceive, derive their significance from the primary. But then, how do the primary names indicate anything? And let me ask another question,— If we had no faculty of speech, how should we com-

municate with one another? Should we not use signs, like the deaf and dumb? The elevation of our hands would mean lightness — heaviness would be expressed by letting them drop. 42
The running of any animal would be described by a similar movement of our own frames. The body can only express anything by imitation; and the tongue or mouth can imitate as well as the rest of the body. But this imitation of the tongue or voice is not yet a name, because people may imitate sheep or goats without naming them. What, then, is a name? In the first place, a name is not a musical, or, secondly, a pictorial imitation, but an imitation of that kind which expresses the nature of a thing; and is the invention not of a musician, or of a painter, but 42
of a namer.

And now, I think that we may consider the names about which you were asking. The way to analyze them will be by going back to the letters, or primary elements of which they are composed. First, we separate the alphabet into classes of letters, distinguishing the consonants, mutes, vowels, and semivowels; and when we have learnt them singly, we shall learn to know them in their various combinations of two or more letters; just as the painter knows how to use either a single colour or a combination of colours. And like the painter, we may apply letters to 4
the expression of objects, and form them into syllables; and these again into words, until the picture or figure — that is, language — is completed. Not that I am literally speaking of ourselves, but I mean to say that this was the way in which the ancients framed language. And this leads me to consider whether the primary as well as the secondary elements are rightly given. I may remark, as I was saying about the Gods, that we can only attain to conjecture of them. But still we insist that ours is the true and only method of discovery; otherwise we must have recourse, like the tragic poets, to a *Deus ex machinâ*, and say that God gave the first names, and therefore they are right; or that the barbarians are older than we are, and that we learnt of them; or that antiquity has cast a veil over the truth. Yet all these are not reasons; they are only ingenious excuses for having no reasons.

I will freely impart to you my own notions, though they are somewhat crude: — The letter ρ appears to me to be the general instrument which the legislator has employed to express all motion

or κίνησις. (I ought to explain that κίνησις is just ἴεσις (going), for the letter η was unknown to the ancients; and the root, κίειν, is a foreign form of ἰέναι: of κίνησις or εἶσις, the opposite is στᾶσις). This use of ρ is evident in the words tremble, break, crush, crumble, and the like; the imposer of names perceived that the
427 tongue is most agitated in the pronunciation of this letter, just as he used ι to express the subtle power which penetrates through all things. The letters φ, ψ, σ, ζ, which require a great deal of wind, are employed in the imitation of such notions as shivering, seething, shaking, and in general of what is windy. The letters δ and τ convey the idea of binding and rest in a place: the λ denotes smoothness, as in the words slip, sleek, sleep, and the like. But when the slipping tongue is detained by the heavier sound of γ, then arises the notion of a glutinous clammy nature: ν is sounded from within, and has a notion of inwardness: α is the expression of size; η of length; ο of roundness, and therefore there is plenty of ο in the word γόγγυλον. That is my view, Hermogenes, of the correctness of names; and I should like to hear what Cratylus would say. 'But, Socrates, as I was telling you, Cratylus mystifies me; I should like to ask him, in your presence, what he means by the fitness of names?' To this appeal, Cratylus replies 'that he
428 cannot explain so important a subject all in a moment.' 'No, but you may "add little to little," as Hesiod says.' Socrates here interposes his own request, that Cratylus will give some account of his theory. Hermogenes and himself are mere sciolists, but Cratylus has reflected on these matters, and has had teachers. Cratylus replies in the words of Achilles: '"Illustrious Ajax, you have spoken in all things much to my mind," whether Euthyphro, or some Muse inhabiting your own breast, was the inspirer.' Socrates replies, that he is afraid of being self-deceived, and therefore he must 'look fore and aft,' as Homer remarks. Does not Cratylus agree with him that names teach us the nature of things? 'Yes.' And naming is an art, and the artists are legis-
429 lators, and like artists in general, some of them are better and some of them are worse than others, and give better or worse laws, and make better or worse names. Cratylus cannot admit that one name is better than another; they are either true names, or they are not names at all; and when he is asked about the name of Hermogenes, who is acknowledged to have no luck in

him, he affirms this to be the name of somebody else. Socrates supposes him to mean that falsehood is impossible, to which his own answer would be, that there has never been a lack of liars. Cratylus presses him with the old sophistical argument, that falsehood is saying that which is not, and therefore saying nothing; — you cannot utter the word which is not. Socrates complains that this argument is too subtle for an old man to understand: Suppose a person addressing Cratylus were to say, Hail, Athenian Stranger, Hermogenes! would these words be true or false? 'I should say that they would be mere unmeaning 430
sounds, like the hammering of a brass pot.' But you would acknowledge that names, as well as pictures, are imitations, and also that pictures may give a right or wrong representation of a man or woman: — why may not names then equally give a representation true and right or false and wrong? Cratylus admits that pictures may give a true or false representation, but denies that names can. Socrates argues, that he may go up to a man and say 'this is your picture,' and again, he may go and say to him 'this is your name' — in the one case appealing to his sense of 431
sight, and in the other to his sense of hearing; — may he not? 'Yes.' Then you will admit that there is a right or a wrong assignment of names, and if of names, then of verbs and nouns; and if of verbs and nouns, then of the sentences which are made up of them; and comparing nouns to pictures, you may give them all the appropriate sounds, or only some of them. And as he who gives all the colours makes a good picture, and he who gives only some of them, a bad or imperfect one, but still a picture; so he who gives all the sounds makes a good name, and he who gives only some of them, a bad or imperfect one, but a name still. The artist of names, that is, the legislator, may be a good or he may be a bad artist. 'Yes, Socrates, but the cases are not parallel; for if you subtract or misplace a letter, the name ceases to be a name.' 43
Socrates admits that the number 10, if an unit is subtracted, would cease to be 10, but denies that names are of this purely quantitative nature. Suppose that there are two objects — Cratylus and the image of Cratylus; and let us imagine that some God makes them perfectly alike, both in their outward form and in their inner nature and qualities: then there will be two Cratyluses, and not merely Cratylus and the image of Cratylus. But an image

in fact always falls short in some degree of the original, and if images are not exact counterparts, why should names be? If they were, they would be the doubles of their originals, and indistinguishable from them; and how ridiculous would this be! Cratylus admits the truth of Socrates' remark. But then Socrates rejoins,
433 he should have the courage to acknowledge that letters may be wrongly inserted in a noun, or a noun in a sentence; and yet the noun or the sentence may retain a meaning. Better to admit this, that we may not be punished like the traveller in Ægina who goes about at night, and that Truth herself may not say to us, 'Too late.' And, errors excepted, we may still affirm that a name to be correct must have proper letters, which bear a resemblance to the thing
434 signified. I must remind you of what Hermogenes and I were saying about the letter ῥ, which was held to be expressive of motion and hardness, as λ is of smoothness; — and this you will admit to be their natural meaning. But then, why do the Eretrians call that σκληρότηρ which we call σκληρότης? We can understand one another, although the letter ῥ is not equivalent to the letter ς: why is this? You reply, because the two letters are sufficiently alike for the purpose of expressing motion. Well, then, there is the letter λ; what business has this in a word meaning hardness? 'Why, Socrates, I retort upon you, that we put in and pull out letters at pleasure.' And the explanation of this is custom or
435 agreement: we have made a convention that the ρ shall mean ς and a convention may indicate by the unlike as well as by the like. How could there be names for all the numbers unless you allow that convention is used? Imitation is a poor thing, and has to be supplemented by convention, which is another poor thing; although I agree with you in thinking that the most perfect form of language is found only where there is a perfect correspondence of sound and meaning. But let me ask you what is the use and force of names? 'The use of names, Socrates, is to inform, and he who knows names knows things.' Do you mean
436 that the discovery of names is the same as the discovery of things? 'Yes.' But do you not see that there is a degree of deception about names? He who first gave names, gave them according to his conception, and that may have been erroneous. 'But then, why, Socrates, is language so consistent? all words have the same laws.' Mere consistency is no test of truth. In

geometrical problems, for example, there may be a flaw at the beginning, and yet the conclusion may follow consistently. And, therefore, a wise man will take especial care of first principles. But are words really consistent; are there not as many terms of praise which signify rest as which signify motion? There is 437
ἐπιστήμη, which is connected with *στάσις*, as *μνήμη* is with *μένω*. *Βέβαιον*, again, is the expression of station and position; *ἱστορία* is clearly descriptive of the stopping (*ἱστάναι*) of the stream; *πιστὸν* indicates the cessation of motion; and there are many words having a bad sense, which are connected with ideas of motion, such as *συμφορὰ*, *ἁμαρτία*, &c.: *ἀμαθία*, again, might be explained, as *ἡ ἁμα θεῷ ἰόντος πορεία*, and *ἀκολασία* as *ἡ ἀκολουθία τοῖς πράγμασιν*. Thus the bad names are framed on the same principle as the good, and other examples might be given, which would favour a theory of rest rather than of motion. 'Yes; but the greater number of words express motion.' Are we to count them, Cratylus; and is correctness of names to be determined by the voice of a majority?

Here is another point: we were saying that the legislator gives 438
names; and therefore we must suppose that he knows the things which he names: but how can he have learnt things from names before there were any names? 'I believe, Socrates, that some power more than human first gave things their names, and that these were necessarily true names.' Then how came the giver of names to contradict himself, and to make some names expressive of rest, and others of motion? 'I do not suppose that he did make them both.' Then which did he make — those which are expressive of rest, or those which are expressive of motion? . . . But if some names are true and others false, we can only decide between them, not by counting words, but by appealing to things. And, if so, we must allow that things may be known without names; for names, as we have several times admitted, are the images of 43
things; and the higher knowledge is of things, and is not to be derived from names; and though I do not doubt that the inventors of language gave names, under the idea that all things are in a state of motion and flux, I believe that they were mistaken; and that having fallen into a whirlpool themselves, they are trying to drag us after them. For is there not a true beauty and a true good, which is always beautiful and always good? Can the thing

beauty be vanishing away from us while the words are yet in our *Cratylus.*
440 mouths? And they could not be known by any one if they are ANALYSIS.
always passing away — for if they are always passing away, the observer has no opportunity of observing their state. Whether the doctrine of the flux or of the eternal nature be the truer, is hard to determine. But no man of sense will put himself, or the education of his mind, in the power of names: he will not condemn himself to be an unreal thing, nor will he believe that everything is in a flux like the water in a leaky vessel, or that the world is a man who has a running at the nose. This doctrine may be true, Cratylus, but is also very likely to be untrue; and therefore I would have you reflect while you are young, and find out the truth, and when you know come and tell me. 'I have thought, Socrates, and after a good deal of thinking I incline to Heracleitus.' Then another day, my friend, you shall give me a lesson. 'Very good, Socrates, and I hope that you will continue to study these things yourself.'

We may now consider (I) how far Plato in the Cratylus has INTRODUC-
discovered the true principles of language, and then (II) proceed TION.
to compare modern speculations respecting the origin and nature of language with the anticipations of his genius.

I. (1) Plato is aware that language is not the work of chance; nor does he deny that there is a natural fitness in names. He only insists that this natural fitness shall be intelligibly explained. But he has no idea that language is a natural organism. He would have heard with surprise that languages are the common work of whole nations in a primitive or semi-barbarous age. How, he would probably have argued, could men devoid of art have contrived a structure of such complexity? No answer could have been given to this question, either in ancient or in modern times, until the nature of primitive antiquity had been thoroughly studied, and the instincts of man had been shown to exist in greater force, when his state approaches more nearly to that of children or animals. The philosophers of the last century, after their manner, would have vainly endeavoured to trace the process by which proper names were converted into common, and would

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have shown how the last effort of abstraction invented prepositions and auxiliaries. The theologian would have proved that language must have had a divine origin, because in childhood, while the organs are pliable, the intelligence is wanting, and when the intelligence is able to frame conceptions, the organs are no longer able to express them. Or, as others have said: Man is man because he has the gift of speech; and he could not have invented that which he is. But this would have been an 'argument too subtle' for Socrates (429 D), who rejects the theological account of the origin of language 'as an excuse for not giving a reason (426 A),' which he compares to the introduction of the '*Deus ex machinâ*' by the tragic poets when they have to solve a difficulty; thus anticipating many modern controversies in which the primary agency of the Divine Being is confused with the secondary cause; and God is assumed to have worked a miracle in order to fill up a lacuna in human knowledge. (Cp. Timaeus, p. 46.)

Neither is Plato wrong in supposing that an element of design and art enters into language. The creative power abating is supplemented by a mechanical process. 'Languages are not made but grow,' but they are made as well as grow; bursting into life like a plant or a flower, they are also capable of being trained and improved and engrafted upon one another. The change in them is effected in earlier ages by musical and euphonic improvements, at a later stage by the influence of grammar and logic, and by the poetical and literary use of words. They develope rapidly in childhood, and when they are full grown and set they may still put forth intellectual powers, like the mind in the body, or rather we may say that the nobler use of language only begins when the frame-work is complete. The savage or primitive man, in whom the natural instinct is strongest, is also the greatest improver of the forms of language. He is the poet or maker of words, as in civilized ages the dialectician is the definer or distinguisher of them. The latter calls the second world of abstract terms into existence, as the former has created the picture sounds which represent natural objects or processes. Poetry and philosophy — these two, are the two great formative principles of languages, when they have passed their first stage, of which, as of the first invention of the arts in general, we only entertain conjecture. And mythology is a link between them, connecting

the visible and invisible, until at length the sensuous exterior falls away, and the severance of the inner and outer world, of the idea and the object of sense, becomes complete. At a later period, logic and grammar, sister arts, preserve and enlarge the decaying instinct of language, by rule and method, which they gather from analysis and observation.

(2) There is no trace in any of Plato's writings that he was acquainted with any language but Greek. Yet he has conceived very truly the relation of Greek to foreign languages, which he is led to consider, because he finds that many Greek words are incapable of explanation. Allowing a good deal for accident, and also for the fancies of the *conditores linguae Graecae*, there is an element of which he is unable to give an account. These unintelligible words he supposes to be of foreign origin, and to have been derived from a time when the Greeks were either barbarians, or in close relations to the barbarians. Socrates is aware that this principle is liable to great abuse; and, like the '*Deus ex machinâ*,' explains nothing. Hence he excuses himself for the employment of such a device, and remarks that in foreign words there is still a principle of correctness, which applies equally both to Greeks and barbarians.

(3) But the greater number of primary words do not admit of derivation from foreign languages; they must be resolved into the letters out of which they are composed, and therefore the letters must have a meaning. The framers of language were aware of this; they observed that α was adapted to express size; η length; o roundness; ν inwardness; ρ rush or roar; λ liquidity; $\gamma\lambda$ the detention of the liquid or slippery element; δ and τ binding; ϕ, ψ, σ, ξ, wind and cold, and so on. Plato's analysis of the letters of the alphabet shows a wonderful insight into the nature of language. He does not expressly distinguish between mere imitation and the symbolical use of sound to express thought, but he recognises in the examples which he gives both modes of imitation. Gesture is the mode which a deaf and dumb person would take of indicating his meaning. And language is the gesture of the tongue; in the use of the letter ρ, to express a rushing or roaring, or of o to express roundness, there is a direct imitation; while in the use of the letter α to express size, or of η to express length, the imitation is symbolical. The use of analogous or similar sounds,

in order to express similar or analogous ideas, seems to have escaped him.

In passing from the gesture of the body to the movement of the tongue, Plato makes a great step in the physiology of language. He was probably the first who said that 'language is imitative sound' (423), which is the greatest and deepest truth of philology; although he is not aware of the laws of euphony and association by which imitation must be regulated. He was probably also the first who made a distinction between simple and compound words, a truth second only in importance to that which has just been mentioned. His great insight in one direction curiously contrasts with his blindness in another; for he appears to be wholly unaware (cp. his derivation of ἀγαθὸς from ἀγαστὸς and θοὸς) of the difference between the root and termination. But we must recollect that he was necessarily more ignorant than any schoolboy of Greek grammar, and had no table of the inflexions of verbs and nouns before his eyes, which might have suggested to him the distinction.

(4) Plato distinctly affirms that language is not truth, or '*philosophie une langue bien faite.*' At first, Socrates has delighted himself with discovering the flux of Heracleitus in language. But he is covertly satirising the pretence of that or any other age to find philosophy in words; and he afterwards corrects any erroneous inference which might be gathered from his experiment. For he finds as many, or almost as many, words expressive of rest, as he had previously found expressive of motion. And even if this had been otherwise, who would learn of words when he might learn of things? There is a great controversy and high argument between Heracleiteans and Eleatics, but no man of sense would commit his soul in such enquiries to the imposers of names. . . In this and other passages Plato shows that he is as completely emancipated from the influence of 'Idols of the tribe' as Bacon himself.

The lesson which may be gathered from words is not metaphysical or moral, but historical. They teach us the affinity of races, they tell us something about the association of ideas, they occasionally preserve the memory of a disused custom; but we cannot safely argue from them about right and wrong, matter and mind, freedom and necessity, or the other problems of moral and

metaphysical philosophy. For the use of words on such subjects may often be metaphorical, accidental, derived from other languages, and may have no relation to the contemporary state of thought and feeling. Nor in any case is the invention of them the result of philosophical reflection; they have been commonly transferred from matter to mind, and their meaning is the very reverse of their etymology. Because there is or is not a name for a thing, we cannot argue that the thing has or has not an actual existence; or that the antitheses, parallels, conjugates, correlatives of language have anything corresponding to them in nature. There are too many words as well as too few; and they generalize the objects or ideas which they represent. The greatest lesson which the philosophical analysis of language teaches us is, that we should be above language, making words our servants, and not allowing them to be our masters.

Plato does not add the further observation, that the etymological meaning of words is in process of being lost. If at first framed on a principle of intelligibility, they would gradually cease to be intelligible, like those of a foreign language. He is willing to admit that they are subject to many changes, and put on many disguises. He acknowledges that the 'poor creature' imitation is supplemented by another 'poor creature,'— convention. But he does not see that 'habit and repute,' and their relation to other words, are always exercising an influence over them. Words appear to be isolated, but they are really the parts of an organism which is always being reproduced. They are refined by civilization, harmonized by poetry, emphasized by literature, technically applied in philosophy and art; they are used as symbols on the border-ground of human knowledge; they receive a fresh impress from individual genius, and come with a new force and association to every lively-minded person. They are fixed by the simultaneous utterance of millions, and yet are always imperceptibly changing; — not the inventors of language, but writing and speaking, and particularly great writers, or works which pass into the hearts of nations, Homer, Shakspere, Dante, the German or English Bible, Kant and Hegel, are the makers of them in later ages. They carry with them the faded recollection of their own past history; the use of a word in a striking and familiar passage gives a complexion to its use everywhere else, and the new use of

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an old and familiar phrase has also a peculiar power over us. But these and other subtleties of language escaped the observation of Plato. He is not aware that the languages of the world are organic structures, and that every word in them is related to every other; nor does he conceive of language as the joint work of the speaker and the hearer, requiring in man a faculty not only of expressing his thoughts but of understanding those of others.

On the other hand, he cannot be justly charged with a desire to frame language on artificial principles. Philosophers have sometimes dreamed of a technical or scientific language, in words which should have fixed meanings, and stand in the same relation to one another as the substances which they denote. But there is no more trace of this in Plato than there is of a language corresponding to the ideas; nor, indeed, could the want of such a language be felt until the sciences were far more developed. Those who would extend the use of technical phraseology beyond the limits of science or of custom, seem to forget that freedom and suggestiveness and the play of association are essential characteristics of language. The great master has shown how he regarded pedantic distinctions of words or attempts to confine their meaning in the satire on Prodicus in the Protagoras.

(5) In addition to these anticipations of the general principles of philology, we may note also a few curious observations on words and sounds. 'The Eretrians say σκληρότης for σκληρότηρ' (434 C); 'the Thessalians call Apollo Ἀπλῶς' (405 D); 'the Phrygians have the words πῦρ, ὐδωρ, κύνες slightly changed' (410 A); 'there is an old Homeric word ἐμήσατο, meaning "he contrived"' (408 A); 'our forefathers, and especially the women, who are most conservative of the ancient language, loved the letters ι and δ; but now ι is changed into η and ε, and δ into ; this is supposed to increase the grandeur of the sound' (418 B). Plato was very willing to use inductive arguments, so far as they were within his reach; but he would also have assigned a large influence to chance. Nor indeed is induction applicable to philology in the same degree as to most of the physical sciences. For after we have pushed our researches to the furthest point, in language as in all the other creations of the human mind, there will always remain an element of exception or accident or free-will, which cannot be eliminated.

The question, 'whether falsehood is impossible,' which Socrates

characteristically sets aside as too subtle for an old man (429 D; cp. Euthyd. 284), could only have arisen in an age of imperfect consciousness, which had not yet learned to distinguish words from things. Socrates replies in effect that words have an independent existence; thus anticipating the solution of the mediaeval controversy of Nominalism and Realism. He is aware too that languages exist in various degrees of perfection (435), and that the analysis of them can only be carried to a certain point (422). 'If we could always, or almost always, use likenesses, which are the appropriate expressions, that would be the most perfect state of language' (439 D). These words suggest a question of deeper interest than the origin of language; viz. what is the ideal of language, how far by any correction of their usages existing languages might become clearer and more expressive than they are, more poetical, and also more logical; or whether they are now finally fixed and have received their last impress from time and authority.

On the whole, the Cratylus seems to contain deeper truths about language than any other ancient writing. But feeling the uncertain ground upon which he is walking, and partly in order to preserve the character of Socrates, Plato envelopes the whole subject in a robe of fancy, and allows his principles to drop out as if by accident.

II. What is the result of recent speculations about the origin and nature of language? Like other modern metaphysical enquiries, they end at last in a statement of facts. But, in order to state or understand the facts, a metaphysical insight seems to be required. There are more things in language than the human mind easily conceives. And many fallacies have to be dispelled, as well as observations made. The true spirit of philosophy or metaphysics can alone charm away metaphysical illusions, which are always reappearing, formerly in the fancies of neoplatonist writers, now in the disguise of experience and common sense. An analogy, a figure of speech, an intelligible theory, a superficial observation of the individual, have often been mistaken for a true account of the origin of language.

Speaking is one of the simplest natural operations, and also the most complex. Nothing would seem to be easier or more trivial than a few words uttered by a child in any language. Yet into

the formation of those words have entered causes which the human mind is not capable of calculating. They are a drop or two of the great stream or ocean of speech which has been flowing in all ages. They have been transmitted from one language to another; like the child himself, they go back to the beginnings of the human race. How they originated, who can tell? Nevertheless we can imagine a stage of human society in which the circle of men's minds was narrower and their sympathies and instincts stronger; in which their organs of speech were more flexible, and the sense of hearing finer and more discerning; in which they lived more in company, and after the manner of children were more given to express their feelings; in which 'they moved all together,' like a herd of wild animals, 'when they moved at all.' Among them, as in every society, a particular person would be more sensitive and intelligent than the rest. Suddenly, on some occasion of interest (at the approach of a wild beast, shall we say?), he first, they following him, utter a cry which resounds through the forest. The cry is almost or quite involuntary, and may be an imitation of the roar of the animal. Thus far we have not speech, but only the inarticulate expression of feeling or emotion in no respect differing from the cries of animals; for they too call to one another and are answered. But now suppose that some one at a distance not only hears the sound, but apprehends the meaning: or we may imagine that the cry is repeated to a member of the society who had been absent; the others act the scene over again when he returns home in the evening. And so the cry becomes a word. The hearer in turn gives back the word to the speaker, who is now aware that he has acquired a new power. Many thousand times he exercises this power; like a child learning to talk, he repeats the same cry again, and again he is answered; he tries experiments with a like result, and the speaker and the hearer rejoice together in their newly-discovered faculty. At first there would be few such cries, and little danger of mistaking or confusing them. For the mind of primitive man had a narrow range of perceptions and feelings; his senses were microscopic; twenty or thirty sounds or gestures would be enough for him, nor would he have any difficulty in finding them. Naturally he broke out into speech — like the young infant he laughed and babbled;

but not until there were hearers as well as speakers did language begin. Not the interjection or the vocal imitation of the object, but the interjection or the vocal imitation of the object understood, is the first rudiment of human speech.

After a while the word gathers associations, and has an independent existence. The imitation of the lion's roar calls up the fears and hopes of the chase, which are excited by his appearance. In the moment of hearing the sound, without any appreciable interval, these and other latent experiences wake up in the mind of the hearer. Not only does he receive an impression, but he brings previous knowledge to bear upon that impression. Necessarily the pictorial image becomes less vivid, while the association of the nature and habits of the animal is more distinctly perceived. The picture passes into a symbol, for there would be too many of them and they would crowd the mind; the vocal imitation, too, is always in process of being lost and being renewed, just as the picture is brought back again in the description of the poet. Words now can be used more freely because there are more of them. What was once an involuntary expression becomes voluntary. Not only can men utter a cry or call, but they can communicate and converse; they can not only use words, but they can choose them and even play with them. The word is separated both from the object and from the mind; and slowly nations and individuals attain to a fuller consciousness of themselves.

Parallel with this mental process the articulation of sounds is gradually becoming perfected. The finer sense detects the differences of them, and begins, first to agglomerate, then to distinguish them. Times, persons, places, relations of all kinds, are expressed by modifications of them. The earliest parts of speech, as we may call them by anticipation, like the first utterances of children, probably partook of the nature of interjections and nouns; then came verbs; at length the whole sentence appeared, and rhythm and metre followed. Each stage in the progress of language was accompanied by some corresponding stage in the mind and civilization of man. In time, when the family became a nation, the wild growth of dialects passed into a language. Then arose poetry and literature. We can hardly realize to ourselves how much with each improvement of language the powers of the human mind were enlarged; how the inner

world took the place of the outer; how the pictorial or symbolical or analogical word was refined into a notion; how language, fair and large and free, was at last complete.

So we may imagine the speech of man to have begun as with the cries of animals, or the stammering lips of children, and to have attained by degrees the perfection of Homer and Plato. Yet we are far from saying that this or any other theory of language is proved by facts. It is not difficult to form an hypothesis which by a series of imaginary transitions will bridge over the chasm which separates man from the animals. Differences of kind may often be thus resolved into differences of degree. But we must not assume that we have in this way discovered the true account of them. Through what struggles the harmonious use of the organs of speech was acquired; to what extent the conditions of human life were different; how far the genius of individuals may have contributed to the discovery of this as of the other arts, we cannot say: Only we seem to see that language is as much the creation of the ear as of the tongue, and the expression of a movement stirring the hearts not of one man only but of many, 'as the trees of the wood are stirred by the wind.' The theory is consistent or not inconsistent with our own mental experience, and throws some degree of light upon a dark corner of the human mind.

In the later analysis of language, we trace the opposite and contrasted elements of the individual and nation, of the past and present, of the inward and outward, of the subject and object, of the notional and relational, of the root or unchanging part of the word and of the changing inflexion, if such a distinction be admitted, of the vowel and the consonant, of quantity and accent, of speech and writing, of poetry and prose. We observe also the reciprocal influence of sounds and conceptions on each other, like the connexion of body and mind; and further remark that although the names of objects were originally proper names, as the grammarian or logician might call them, yet at a later stage they become universal notions, which combine into particulars and individuals, and are taken out of the first rude agglomeration of sounds that they may be replaced in a higher and more logical order. We see that in the simplest sentences are contained grammar and logic — the parts of speech, the Eleatic philosophy

and the Kantian categories. So complex is language, and so expressive not only of the meanest wants of man, but of his highest thoughts; so various are the aspects in which it is regarded by us. Then again, when we follow the history of languages, we observe that they are always slowly moving, half dead, half alive, half solid, half fluid; the breath of a moment, yet like the air, continuous in all ages and countries,—like the glacier, too, containing within them a trickling stream which deposits débris of the rocks over which it passes. There were happy moments, as we may conjecture, in the lives of nations, at which they came to the birth — as in the golden age of literature, the man and the time seem to conspire; the eloquence of the bard or chief, as in later times the creations of the great writer who is the expression of his age, became impressed on the minds of their countrymen, perhaps in the hour of some crisis of national development — a migration, a conquest, or the like. The picture of the word which was beginning to be lost, is now revived; the sound again echoes to the sense; men find themselves capable not only of expressing more feelings, and describing more objects, but of expressing and describing them better. The world before the flood, that is to say, the world of ten, twenty, a hundred thousand years ago, has passed away and left no sign. But the best conception that we can form of it, though imperfect and uncertain, is gained from the analogy of causes still in action, some powerful and sudden, others working slowly in the course of infinite ages. Something too may be allowed to 'the persistency of the strongest,' to 'the survival of the fittest,' in this as in the other realms of nature.

These are some of the reflections which the modern philosophy of language suggests to us about the powers of the human mind and the forces and influences by which the efforts of men to utter articulate sounds were inspired. Yet in making these and similar generalizations we may note also dangers to which we are exposed. (1) There is the confusion of ideas with facts — of mere possibilities, and generalities, and modes of conception with actual and definite knowledge. The words 'evolution,' 'birth,' 'law,' 'development,' 'instinct,' 'implicit,' 'explicit,' and the like, have a false clearness or comprehensiveness, which adds nothing to our knowledge. The metaphor of a flower or a tree, or some other work of nature or art, is often in like manner only a

pleasing picture. (2) There is the fallacy of resolving the languages which we know into their parts, and then imagining that we can discover the nature of language by reconstructing them. (3) There is the danger of identifying language, not with thoughts but with ideas. (4) There is the error of supposing that the analysis of grammar and logic has always existed, or that their distinctions were familiar to Socrates and Plato. (5) There is the fallacy of exaggerating, and also of diminishing the interval which separates articulate from inarticulate language — the cries of animals from the speech of man — the instinct of animals from the reason of man. (6) There is the danger which besets all enquiries into the early history of man — of interpreting the past by the present, and of substituting the definite and intelligible for the true but dim outline which is the horizon of human knowledge.

The greatest light is thrown upon the nature of language by analogy. We have the analogy of the cries of animals, of the songs of birds ('man, like the nightingale, is a singing bird, but is ever binding up thoughts with musical notes'), of music, of children learning to speak, of barbarous nations in which the linguistic instinct is still undecayed, of ourselves learning to think and speak a new language, of the deaf and dumb who have words without sounds, of the various disorders of speech; and we have the after-growth of mythology, which, like language, is an unconscious creation of the human mind. We can observe the social and collective instincts of animals; and may remark how, when domesticated, they have the power of understanding but not of speaking, while on the other hand, some birds which are comparatively devoid of intelligence, make a nearer approach to articulate speech. We may note how in the animals there is a want of that sympathy with one another which appears to be the soul of language. We can compare the use of speech with other mental and bodily operations; for speech too is a kind of gesture, and in the child or savage accompanied with gesture. We may observe that the child learns to speak, as he learns to walk or to eat, by a natural impulse; yet in either case not without a power of imitation which is also natural to him — he is taught to read, but he breaks forth spontaneously in speech. We can trace the impulse to bind together the world in ideas beginning in the first efforts to speak and culminating in philosophy. But there

remains an element which cannot be explained, or even adequately described. We can understand how man creates or constructs consciously and by design; and see, if we do not understand, how nature, by a law, calls into being an organized structure. But the intermediate organism which stands between man and nature, which is the work of mind yet unconscious, and in which mind and matter seem to meet, and mind unperceived to herself is really limited by all other minds, is neither understood nor seen by us, and is with reluctance admitted to be a fact.

Language is an aspect of man, of nature, and of nations, the transfiguration of the world in thought, the meeting-point of the physical and mental sciences, and also the mirror in which they are reflected, present at every moment to the individual, and yet having a sort of eternal or universal nature. When we analyze our own mental processes, we find words everywhere in every degree of clearness and consistency, fading away in dreams and more like pictures, rapidly succeeding one another in our waking thoughts, attaining a greater distinctness and consecutiveness in speech, and a greater still in writing, taking the place of one another when we try to become emancipated from their influence. For in all processes of the mind which are conscious we are talking to ourselves; the attempt to think without words is a mere illusion,— they are always reappearing when we fix our thoughts. And speech is not a separate faculty, but the expression of all our faculties, to which all our other powers of expression, signs, looks, gestures, lend their aid, of which the instrument is not the tongue only, but more than half the human frame.

The minds of men are sometimes carried on to think of their lives and of their actions as links in a chain of causes and effects going back to the beginning of time. A few have seemed to lose the sense of their own individuality in the universal cause or nature. In like manner we might think of the words which we daily use, as derived from the first speech of man, and of all the languages in the world, as the expressions or varieties of a single force or life of language of which the thoughts of men are the accident. Such a conception enables us to grasp the power and wonder of languages, and is very natural to the scientific philologist. For he, like the metaphysician, believes in the reality of

that which absorbs his own mind. Nor do we deny the enormous influence which language has exercised over thought. Fixed words, like fixed ideas, have often governed the world. But in such representations we attribute to language too much the nature of a cause, and too little of an effect,—too much of an absolute, too little of a relative character,—too much of an ideal, too little of a matter-of-fact existence.

Or again, we may frame a single abstract notion of language of which all existent languages may be supposed to be the perversion. But we must not conceive that this logical figment had ever a real existence, or is anything more than an effort of the mind to give unity to infinitely various phenomena. There is no abstract language '*in rerum natura*,' any more than there is an abstract tree, but only languages in various stages of growth, maturity, and decay. Nor do other logical distinctions or even grammatical exactly correspond to the facts of language; for they too are attempts to give unity and regularity to a subject which is partly irregular.

We find, however, that there are distinctions of another kind by which this vast field of language admits of being mapped out. There is the distinction between biliteral and triliteral roots, and the various inflexions which accompany them; between the mere mechanical cohesion of sounds or words, and the 'chemical' combination of them into a new word; there is the distinction between languages which have had a free and full development of their organisms, and languages which have been stunted in their growth,—lamed in their hands or feet, and never able to acquire afterwards the powers in which they are deficient; there is the distinction between synthetical languages like Greek and Latin, which have retained their inflexions, and analytical languages like English or French, which have lost them. Innumerable as are the languages and dialects of mankind, there are comparatively few classes to which they can be referred.

Another road through this chaos is provided by the physiology of speech. The organs of language are the same in all mankind, and are only capable of uttering a certain number of sounds. Every man has tongue, teeth, lips, palate, throat, mouth, which he may close or open, and adapt in various ways; making, first, vowels and consonants; and secondly, other classes of letters.

The elements of all speech, like the elements of the musical scale, are few and simple, though admitting of infinite gradations and combinations. Whatever slight differences exist in the use or formation of these organs, owing to climate or the sense of euphony or other causes, they are as nothing compared with their agreement. Here then is a real basis of unity in the study of philology, unlike that imaginary abstract unity of which we were just now speaking.

Whether we regard language from the psychological, or historical, or physiological point of view, the materials of our knowledge are inexhaustible. The comparisons of children learning to speak, of barbarous nations, of musical notes, of the cries of animals, of the song of birds, increase our insight into the nature of human speech. Many observations which would otherwise have escaped us are suggested by them. But they do not explain why, in man and in man only, the speaker met with a response from the hearer, and the half articulate sound gradually developed into Sanscrit and Greek. They hardly enable us to approach any nearer the secret of the origin of language, which, like some of the other great secrets of nature,— the origin of birth and death, or of animal life,— remains inviolable. That problem is indissolubly bound up with the origin of man; and if we ever know more of the one, we may expect to know more of the other.[1]

It is more than sixteen years since the preceding remarks were written, which with a few alterations have now been reprinted. During the interval the progress of philology has been very great. More languages have been compared; the inner structure of language has been laid bare; the relations of sounds have been more accurately discriminated; the manner in which dialects affect or are affected by the literary or principal form of a language is better understood. Many merely verbal questions have been eliminated; the remains of the old traditional methods have died away. The study has passed from the metaphysical into an

[1] Compare W. Humboldt, 'Ueber die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues;' M. Müller, 'Lectures on the Science of Language;' Steinthal, 'Einleitung in die Psychologie und Sprachwissenschaft.'

historical stage. Grammar is no longer confused with language, nor the anatomy of words and sentences with their life and use. Figures of speech, by which the vagueness of theories is often concealed, have been stripped off; and we see language more as it truly was. The immensity of the subject is gradually revealed to us, and the reign of law becomes apparent. Yet the law is but partially seen; the traces of it are often lost in the distance. For languages have a natural but not a perfect growth; like other creations of nature into which the will of man enters, they are full of what we term accident and irregularity. And the difficulties of the subject become not less, but greater, as we proceed — it is one of those studies in which we seem to know less as we know more; partly because we are no longer satisfied with the vague and superficial ideas of it which prevailed fifty years ago; partly also because the remains of the languages with which we are acquainted always were, and if they are still living, are, in a state of transition; and thirdly, because there are lacunae in our knowledge of them which can never be filled up. Not a tenth, not a hundredth part of them has been preserved. Yet the materials at our disposal are far greater than any individual can use. Such are a few of the general reflections which the present state of philology calls up.

(1) Language seems to be composite, but into its first elements the philologer has never been able to penetrate. However far he goes back, he never arrives at the beginning; or rather, as in Geology or in Astronomy, there is no beginning. He is too apt to suppose that by breaking up the existing forms of language into their parts he will arrive at a previous stage of it, but he is merely analyzing what never existed, or is never known to have existed, except in a composite form. He may divide nouns and verbs into roots and inflexions, but he has no evidence which will show that the ω of τύπτω or the μ of τίθημι, though analogous to ἐγώ, με, either became pronouns or were generated out of pronouns. To say that 'pronouns, like ripe fruit, dropped out of verbs,' is a misleading figure of speech. Although all languages have some common principles, there is no primitive form or forms of language known to us, or to be reasonably imagined, from which they are all descended. No inference can be drawn from language, either for or against the unity of the human race. Nor is there any proof

that words were ever used without any relation to each other. Whatever may be the meaning of a sentence or a word when applied to primitive language, it is probable that the sentence is more akin to the original form than the word, and that the later stage of language is the result rather of analysis than of synthesis, or possibly is a combination of the two. Nor, again, are we sure that the original process of learning to speak was the same in different places or among different races of men. It may have been slower with some, quicker with others. Some tribes may have used shorter, others longer words or cries: they may have been more or less inclined to agglutinate or to decompose them: they may have modified them by the use of prefixes, suffixes, infixes; by the lengthening and strengthening of vowels or by the shortening and weakening of them, by the thickening or rarefaction of consonants. But who gave to language these primeval laws; or why one race has triliteral, another biliteral roots; or why in some members of a group of languages *b* becomes *p*, or *d*, *t*, or *ch*, *k*; or why two languages resemble one another in certain parts of their structure and differ in others; or why in one language there is a greater development of vowels, in another of consonants, and the like — are questions of which we only 'entertain conjecture.' We must remember the length of time that has elapsed since man first walked upon the earth, and that in this vast but unknown period every variety of language may have been in process of formation and decay, many times over.[1] It can hardly be supposed that any traces of an original

[1] Cp. Plato, Laws, iii. 676: —

'*Ath.* And what then is to be regarded as the origin of government? Will not a man be able to judge best from a point of view in which he may behold the progress of states and their transitions to good and evil?

Cle. What do you mean?

Ath. I mean that he might watch them from the point of view of time, and observe the changes which take place in them during infinite ages.

Cle. How so?

Ath. Why, do you think that you can reckon the time which has elapsed since cities first existed and men were citizens of them?

Cle. Hardly.

Ath. But you are quite sure that it must be vast and incalculable?

Cle. No doubt.

Ath. And have there not been thousands and thousands of cities which have come into being and perished during this period? And has not every place had

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language still survive, any more than of the first huts or buildings which were constructed by man. Nor are we at all certain of the relation, if any, in which the greater families of languages stand to each other. The influence of individuals must always have been a disturbing element in primitive language. Like great writers in later times, there may have been many a barbaric genius who taught the men of his tribe to sing or speak, showing them by example how to continue or divide their words, charming their souls with rhythm and accent and intonation, finding in familiar objects the expression of their confused fancies — to whom the whole of language might in truth be said to be a figure of speech. One person may have introduced a new custom into the formation or pronunciation of a word; he may have been imitated by others, and the custom, or form, or accent, or quantity, or rhyme which he introduced in a single word may have become the type on which many other words or inflexions of words were framed, and may have quickly run through a whole language. For like the other gifts which nature has bestowed upon man, that of speech has been conveyed to him through the medium, not of the many, but of the few, who were his 'law-givers' — 'the legislator with the dialectician standing on his right hand,' in Plato's striking image, who formed the manners of men and gave them customs, whose voice and look and behaviour, whose gesticulations and other peculiarities were instinctively imitated by them,— the 'king of men' who was their priest, almost their God. . . . But these are conjectures only: so little do we know of the origin of language that the real scholar is indisposed to touch the subject at all.

(2) There are other errors besides the figment of a primitive or original language which it is time to leave behind us. We no longer divide language into synthetical and analytical, or suppose similarity of structure to be the safe or only guide to the affinities

endless forms of government, and been sometimes rising, and at other times falling, and again improving or waning?'

Aristot. Metaph. xi. 8. 21: —

'And if a person should conceive the tales of mythology to mean only that men thought the gods to be the first essences of things, he would deem the reflection to have been inspired and would consider that, whereas probably every art and part of wisdom had been *discovered and lost many times over*, such notions were but a remnant of the past which has survived to our day.'

of them. We do not confuse the parts of speech with the categories of Logic. Nor do we conceive languages any more than civilizations to be in a state of dissolution; they do not easily pass away, but are far more tenacious of life than the tribes by whom they are spoken. 'Where two or three are gathered together,' they survive. As in the human frame, as in the state, there is a principle of renovation as well as of decay which is at work in all of them. Neither do we suppose them to be invented by the wit of man. With few exceptions, e. g. technical words or words newly imported from a foreign language, and the like, in which art has imitated nature, 'words are not made but grow.' Nor do we attribute to them a supernatural origin. The law which regulates them is like the law which governs the circulation of the blood, or the rising of the sap in trees; the action of it is uniform, but the result, which appears in the superficial forms of men and animals or in the leaves of trees, is an endless profusion and variety. The laws of vegetation are invariable, but no two plants, no two leaves of the forest are precisely the same. The laws of language are invariable, but no two languages are alike, no two words have exactly the same meaning. No two sounds are exactly of the same quality, or leave on the ear precisely the same impression.

It would be well if there were a similar consensus about some other points which appear to be still in dispute. Is language conscious or unconscious? In speaking or writing have we present to our minds the meaning or the sound or the construction of the words which we are using? — No more than the separate drops of water with which we quench our thirst are present: the drinking of the whole cup may be conscious; not so the drinking of each particle: So the whole sentence may be conscious, but the several words, syllables, letters are not thought of separately when we are uttering them. Like other natural operations, the process of speech, when most perfect, is least observed by us. We do not pause at each mouthful to dwell upon the taste of it: nor has the speaker time to ask himself the comparative merits of different modes of expression while he is uttering them. There are many things in the use of language which may be observed from without, but which cannot be explained from within. Consciousness carries us

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but a little way in the investigation of the mind; it is not the faculty of internal observation, but only the dim light which makes such observation possible. What is supposed to be our consciousness of language is really only the analysis of it, and this analysis admits of innumerable degrees. But would it not be better if this term, which is so misleading, and yet has played so great a part in mental science, were either banished or used only with the distinct meaning of 'attention to our own minds,' such as is called forth, not by familiar mental processes, but by the interruption of them? Now in this sense we may truly say that we are not conscious of ordinary speech, though we are commonly roused to attention by the misuse or mispronunciation of a word. Still less, even in schools and academies, do we ever attempt to invent new words or to alter the meaning of old ones, except in the case, mentioned above, of technical or borrowed words which are artificially made or imported because a need of them is felt. Neither in our own nor in any other age has the conscious effort of reflection in man contributed in an appreciable degree to the formation of language. 'Which of us by taking thought' can make new words or constructions? Reflection is the least of the causes by which language is affected, and is likely to have the least power, when the linguistic instinct is greatest, as in young children and in the infancy of nations.

A kindred error is the separation of the phonetic from the mental element of language; they are really inseparable — no definite line can be drawn between them, any more than in any other common act of mind and body. It is true that within certain limits we possess the power of varying sounds by opening and closing the mouth, by touching the palate or the teeth with the tongue, by lengthening or shortening the vocal instrument, by greater or less stress, by a higher or lower pitch of the voice, and we can substitute one note or accent for another. But behind the organs of speech and their action there remains the informing mind, which sets them in motion and works together with them. And behind the great structure of human speech and the lesser varieties of language which arise out of the many degrees and kinds of human intercourse, there is also the unknown or over-ruling law of God or nature which gives order to it in its infinite greatness, and variety in its infinitesimal minuteness — both

equally inscrutable to us. We need no longer discuss whether philology is to be classed with the Natural or the Mental sciences, if we frankly recognize that, like all the sciences which are concerned with man, it has a double aspect,— inward and outward; and that the inward can only be known through the outward. Neither need we raise the question whether the laws of language, like the other laws of human action, admit of exceptions. The answer in all cases is the same — that the laws of nature are uniform, though the consistency or continuity of them is not always perceptible to us. The superficial appearances of language, as of nature, are irregular, but we do not therefore deny their deeper uniformity. The comparison of the growth of language in the individual and in the nation cannot be wholly discarded, for nations are made up of individuals. But in this, as in the other political sciences, we must distinguish between collective and individual actions or processes, and not attribute to the one what belongs to the other. Again, when we speak of the heredity or paternity of a language, we must remember that the parents are alive as well as the children, and that all the preceding generations survive (after a manner) in the latest form of it. And when, for the purposes of comparison, we form into groups the roots or terminations of words, we should not forget how casual is the manner in which their resemblances have arisen — they were not first written down by a grammarian in the paradigms of a grammar and learned out of a book, but were due to many chance attractions of sound or of meaning, or of both combined. So many cautions have to be borne in mind, and so many first thoughts to be dismissed, before we can proceed safely in the path of philological enquiry. It might be well sometimes to lay aside figures of speech, such as the 'root' and the 'branches,' the 'stem,' the 'strata' of Geology, the 'compounds' of Chemistry, 'the ripe fruit of pronouns dropping from verbs' (see above), and the like, which are always interesting, but are apt to be delusive. Yet such figures of speech are far nearer the truth than the theories which attribute the invention and improvement of language to the conscious action of the human mind. . . Lastly, it is doubted by recent philologians whether climate can be supposed to have exercised any influence worth speaking of on a language: such

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a view is said to be unproven: it had better therefore not be silently assumed.

'Natural selection' and the 'survival of the fittest' have been applied in the field of philology, as well as in the other sciences which are concerned with animal and vegetable life. And a Darwinian school of philologists has sprung up, who are sometimes accused of putting words in the place of things. It seems to be true, that whether applied to language or to other branches of knowledge, the Darwinian theory, unless very precisely defined, hardly escapes from being a truism. If by 'the natural selection' of words or meanings of words or by the 'persistence and survival of the fittest' the maintainer of the theory intends to affirm nothing more than this — that the word 'fittest to survive' survives, he adds not much to the knowledge of language. But if he means that the word or the meaning of the word or some portion of the word which comes into use or drops out of use is selected or rejected on the ground of economy or parsimony or ease to the speaker or clearness or euphony or expressiveness, or greater or less demand for it, or anything of this sort, he is affirming a proposition which has several senses, and in none of these senses can be asserted to be uniformly true. For the laws of language are precarious, and can only act uniformly when there is such frequency of intercourse among neighbours as is sufficient to enforce them. And there are many reasons why a man should prefer his own way of speaking to that of others, unless by so doing he becomes unintelligible. The struggle for existence among words is not of that fierce and irresistible kind in which birds, beasts and fishes devour one another, but of a milder sort, allowing one usage to be substituted for another, not by force, but by the persuasion, or rather by the prevailing habit, of a majority. The favourite figure, in this, as in some other uses of it, has tended rather to obscure than explain the subject to which it has been applied. Nor in any case can the struggle for existence be deemed to be the sole or principal cause of changes in language, but only one among many, and one of which we cannot easily measure the importance. There is a further objection which may be urged equally against all applications of the Darwinian theory. As in animal life and likewise in vegetable, so in languages, the process of change is

said to be insensible: sounds, like animals, are supposed to pass into one another by imperceptible gradation. But in both cases the newly-created forms soon become fixed; there are few if any vestiges of the intermediate links, and so the better half of the evidence of the change is wanting.

(3) Among the incumbrances or illusions of language may be reckoned many of the rules and traditions of grammar, whether ancient grammar or the corrections of it which modern philology has introduced. Grammar, like law, delights in definition: human speech, like human action, though very far from being a mere chaos, is indefinite, admits of degrees, and is always in a state of change or transition. Grammar gives an erroneous conception of language: for it reduces to a system that which is not a system. Its figures of speech, pleonasms, ellipses, anacolutha, *πρὸς τὸ σημαινόμενον*, and the like, have no reality; they do not either make curious expressions more intelligible or show the way in which they have arisen; they are chiefly designed to bring an earlier use of language into conformity with the later. Often they seem intended only to remind us that great poets like Aeschylus or Sophocles or Pindar or a great prose writer like Thucydides are guilty of taking unwarrantable liberties with grammatical rules; it appears never to have occurred to the inventors of them that these real 'conditores linguae Graecae' lived in an age before grammar, when 'Greece also was living Greece.' It is the anatomy, not the physiology of language, which grammar seeks to describe: into the idiom and higher life of words it does not enter. The ordinary Greek grammar gives a complete paradigm of the verb, without suggesting that the double or treble forms of Perfects, Aorists, etc. are hardly ever contemporaneous. It distinguishes Moods and Tenses, without observing how much of the nature of the one passes into the other. It makes three Voices, Active, Passive, and Middle, but takes no notice of the precarious existence and uncertain character of the last of the three. Language is a thing of degrees and relations and associations and exceptions: grammar ties it up in fixed rules. Language has many varieties of usage: grammar tries to reduce them to a single one. Grammar divides verbs into regular and irregular: it does not recognize that the irregular, equally with the regular, are subject to law, and

that a language which had no exceptions would not be a natural growth: for it could not have been subjected to the influences by which language is ordinarily affected. It is always wanting to describe ancient languages in the terms of a modern one. It has a favourite fiction that one word is put in the place of another; the truth is that no word is ever put for another. It has another fiction, that a word has been omitted: words are not really omitted, but they are no longer needed, and therefore they pass out of use. The common explanation of κατὰ or some other preposition 'being understood' in a Greek sentence is another fiction of the same kind, which tends to disguise the fact that under cases were comprehended originally many more relations, and that prepositions are used only to define the meaning of them with greater precision. These instances are sufficient to show the sort of errors which grammar introduces into language. We are not considering the question of its utility to the beginner in the study. Even to him the best grammar is the shortest and that in which he will have least to unlearn. It may be said that the explanations here referred to are already out of date, and that the study of Greek grammar has received a new character from comparative philology. This is true; but it is also true that the traditional grammar has still a great hold on the mind of the student.

Metaphysics are even more troublesome than the figments of grammar, because they wear the appearance of philosophy and there is no test to which they can be subjected. They are useful in so far as they give us an insight into the history of the human mind and the modes of thought which have existed in former ages; or in so far as they furnish wider conceptions of the different branches of knowledge and of their relation to one another. But they are worse than useless when they outrun experience and abstract the mind from the observation of facts, only to envelope it in a mist of words. Some philologers, like Schleicher, have been greatly influenced by the philosophy of Hegel; nearly all of them to a certain extent have fallen under the dominion of physical science. Even Kant himself thought that the first principles of philosophy could be elicited from the analysis of the proposition, in this respect falling short of Plato. Westphal holds that there are three stages of language:

(1) in which things were characterized independently, (2) in which they were regarded in relation to human thought, and (3) in relation to one another. But are not such distinctions an anachronism? for they imply a growth of abstract ideas which never existed in early times. Language cannot be explained by Metaphysics; for it is prior to them and much more nearly allied to sense. It is not likely that the meaning of the cases is ultimately resolvable into relations of space and time. Nor can we suppose the conception of cause and effect or of the finite and infinite or of the same and other to be latent in language at a time when in their abstract form they had never entered into the mind of man. . . . If the science of Comparative Philology had possessed 'enough of Metaphysics to get rid of Metaphysics,' it would have made far greater progress.

(4) Our knowledge of language is almost confined to languages which are fully developed. They are of several patterns; and these become altered by admixture in various degrees,— they may only borrow a few words from one another and retain their life comparatively unaltered, or they may meet in a struggle for existence until one of the two is overpowered and retires from the field. They attain the full rights and dignity of language when they acquire the use of writing and have a literature of their own; they pass into dialects and grow out of them, in proportion as men are isolated or united by locality or occupation. The common language sometimes reacts upon the dialects and imparts to them also a literary character. The laws of language can be best discerned in the great crises of language, especially in the transitions from ancient to modern forms of them, whether in Europe or Asia. Such changes are silent notes of the world's history; they mark periods of unknown length in which war and conquest were running riot over whole continents, times of suffering too great to be endured by the human race, in which the masters became subjects and the subject races masters, in which driven by necessity or impelled by some instinct, tribes or nations left their original homes and but slowly found a resting-place. Language would be the greatest of all historical monuments, if it could only tell us the history of itself.

(5) There are many ways in which we may approach this study.

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The simplest of all is to observe our own use of language in conversation or in writing, how we put words together, how we construct and connect sentences, what are the rules of accent and rhythm in verse or prose, the formation and composition of words, the laws of euphony and sound, the affinities of letters, the mistakes to which we ourselves are most liable of spelling or pronunciation. We may compare with our own language some other, even when we have only a slight knowledge of it, such as French or German. Even a little Latin will enable us to appreciate the grand difference between ancient and modern European languages. In the child learning to speak we may note the inherent strength of language, which like 'a mountain river' is always forcing its way out. We may witness the delight in imitation and repetition, and some of the laws by which sounds pass into one another. We may learn something also from the falterings of old age, the searching for words, and the confusion of them with one another, the forgetfulness of proper names (more commonly than of other words because they are more isolated), aphasia, and the like. There are philological lessons also to be gathered from nicknames, from provincialisms, from the slang of great cities, from the argot of Paris (that language of suffering and crime, so pathetically described by Victor Hugo), from the imperfect articulation of the deaf and dumb, from the jabbering of animals, from the analysis of sounds in relation to the organs of speech. The phonograph affords a visible evidence of the nature and divisions of sound; we may be truly said to know what we can manufacture. Artificial languages, such as that of Bishop Wilkins, are chiefly useful in showing what language is not. The study of any foreign language may be made also a study of Comparative Philology. There are several points, such as the nature of irregular verbs, of indeclinable parts of speech, the influence of euphony, the decay or loss of inflections, the elements of syntax, which may be examined as well in the history of our own language as of any other. A few well-selected questions may lead the student at once into the heart of the mystery: such as, Why are the pronouns and the verb of existence generally more irregular than any other parts of speech? Why is the number of words so small in which the sound is an echo of the sense? Why

does the meaning of words depart so widely from their etymology? Why do substantives often differ in meaning from the verbs to which they are related, adverbs from adjectives! Why do words differing in origin coalesce in the same sound though retaining their differences of meaning? Why are some verbs impersonal? Why are there only so many parts of speech, and on what principle are they divided? These are a few crucial questions which give an insight from different points of view into the true nature of language.

(6) Thus far we have been endeavouring to strip off from language the false appearances in which grammar and philology, or the love of system generally, have clothed it. We have also sought to indicate the sources of our knowledge of it and the spirit in which we should approach it. We may now proceed to consider some of the principles or natural laws which have created or modified it.

i. The first and simplest of all the principles of language, common also to the animals, is imitation. The lion roars, the wolf howls in the solitude of the forest: they are answered by similar cries heard from a distance. The bird, too, mimics the voice of man and makes answer to him. Man tells to man the secret place in which he is hiding himself; he remembers and repeats the sound which he has heard. The love of imitation becomes a passion and an instinct to him. Primitive men learnt to speak from one another, like a child from its mother or nurse. They learnt of course a rudimentary, half-articulate language, the cry or song or speech which was the expression of what we now call human thoughts and feelings. We may still remark how much greater and more natural the exercise of the power of imitation is in the use of language than in any other process or action of the human mind.

ii. Imitation provided the first material of language: but it was 'without form and void.' During how many years or hundreds or thousands of years the imitative or half-articulate stage continued there is no possibility of determining. But we may reasonably conjecture that there was a time when the vocal utterance of man was intermediate between what we now call language and the cry of a bird or animal. Speech before language was a *rudis indigestaque materies*, not yet distributed

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into words and sentences, in which the cry of fear or joy mingled with more definite sounds recognized by custom as the expressions of things or events. It was the principle of analogy which introduced into this 'indigesta moles' order and measure. It was Anaxagoras' *ὁμοῦ πάντα χρήματα, εἶτα νοῦς ἐλθὼν διεκόσμησε*: the light of reason lighted up all things and at once began to arrange them. In every sentence, in every word and every termination of a word, this power of forming relations to one another was contained. There was a proportion of sound to sound, of meaning to meaning, of meaning to sound. The cases and numbers of nouns, the persons, tenses, numbers of verbs, were generally on the same or nearly the same pattern and had the same meaning. The sounds by which they were expressed were rough-hewn at first; after a while they grew more refined — the natural laws of euphony began to affect them. The rules of syntax are likewise based upon analogy. Time has an analogy with space, arithmetic with geometry. Not only in musical notes, but in the quantity, quality, accent, rhythm of human speech, trivial or serious, there is a law of proportion. As in things of beauty, as in all nature, in the composition as well as in the motion of all things, there is a similarity of relations by which they are held together.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the analogies of language are always uniform: there may be often a choice between several, and sometimes one and sometimes another will prevail. In Greek there are three declensions of nouns; the forms of cases in one of them may intrude upon another. Similarly verbs in *-ω* and *-μι* interchange forms of tenses, and the completed paradigm of the verb is often made up of both. The same nouns may be partly declinable and partly indeclinable, and in some of their cases may have fallen out of use. Here are rules with exceptions; they are not however really exceptions, but contain in themselves indications of other rules. Many of these interruptions or variations of analogy occur in pronouns or in the verb of existence of which the forms were too common and therefore too deeply imbedded in language entirely to drop out. The same verbs in the same meaning may sometimes take one case, sometimes another. The participle may also have the character of an adjective, the adverb either of an adjective or of a preposition.

These exceptions are as regular as the rules, but the causes of them are seldom known to us.

Language, like the animal and vegetable worlds, is everywhere intersected by the lines of analogy. Like number from which it seems to be derived, the principle of analogy opens the eyes of men to discern the similarities and differences of things, and their relations to one another. At first these are such as lie on the surface only; after a time they are seen by men to reach farther down into the nature of things. Gradually in language they arrange themselves into a sort of imperfect system; groups of personal and case endings are placed side by side. The fertility of language produces many more than are wanted; and the superfluous ones are utilized by the assignment to them of new meanings. The vacuity and the superfluity are thus partially compensated by each other. It must be remembered that in all the languages which have a literature, certainly in Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, we are not at the beginning but almost at the end of the linguistic process; we have reached a time when the verb and the noun are nearly perfected, though in no language did they completely perfect themselves, because for some unknown reason the motive powers of languages seem to have ceased when they were on the eve of completing their work; they became fixed or crystallized in an imperfect form either from the influence of writing and literature, or because no further differentiation of them was required for the intelligibility of language. So not without admixture and confusion and displacement and contamination of sounds and the meanings of words, a lower stage of language passes into a higher. Thus far we can see and no further. When we ask the reason why this principle of analogy prevails in all the vast domain of language, there is no answer to the question; or no other answer but this, that there are innumerable ways in which, like number, analogy permeates, not only language, but the whole world, both visible and intellectual. We know from experience that it does not (*a*) arise from any conscious act of reflection that the accusative of a Latin noun in *us* should end in *um*; nor (*b*) from any necessity of being understood,—much less articulation would suffice for this; nor (*c*) from greater convenience or expressiveness of particular sounds. Such notions were certainly far enough away

from the mind of primitive man. We may speak of a latent instinct, of a survival of the fittest, easiest, most euphonic, most economical of breath, in the case of one of two competing sounds; but these expressions do not add anything to our knowledge. We may try to grasp the infinity of language either under the figure of a limitless plain divided into countries and districts by natural boundaries, or of a vast river eternally flowing whose origin is concealed from us; we may apprehend partially the laws by which speech is regulated: but we do not know, and we seem as if we should never know, any more than in the parallel case of the origin of species, how vocal sounds received life and grew, and in the form of languages came to be distributed over the earth.

iii. Next in order to analogy in the formation of language or even prior to it comes the principle of onomatopea, which is itself a kind of analogy or similarity of sound and meaning. In by far the greater number of words it has become disguised and has disappeared; but in no stage of language is it entirely lost. It belongs chiefly to early language, in which words were few; and its influence grew less and less as time went on. To the ear which had a sense of harmony it became a barbarism which disturbed the flow and equilibrium of discourse; it was an excrescence which had to be cut out, a survival which needed to be got rid of, because it was out of keeping with the rest. It remained for the most part only as a formative principle, which used words and letters not as crude imitations of other natural sounds, but as symbols of ideas which were naturally associated with them. It received in another way a new character; it affected not so much single words, as larger portions of human speech. It regulated the juxtaposition of sounds and the cadence of sentences. It was the music, not of song, but of speech, in prose as well as verse. The old onomatopea of primitive language was refined into an onomatopea of a higher kind, in which it is no longer true to say that a particular sound corresponds to a motion or action of man or beast or movement of nature, but that in all the higher uses of language the sound is the echo of the sense, especially in poetry, in which beauty and expressiveness are given to human thoughts by the harmonious composition of the words, syllables, letters, accents,

quantities, rhythms, rhymes, varieties and contrasts of all sorts. The poet with his 'Break, break, break' or his ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν or his 'longius ex altoque sinum trahit,' can produce a far finer music than any crude imitations of things or actions in sound, although a letter or two having this imitative power may be a lesser element of beauty in such passages. The same subtle sensibility, which adapts the word to the thing, adapts the sentence or cadence to the general meaning or spirit of the passage. This is the higher onomatopea which has banished the cruder sort as unworthy to have a place in great languages and literatures.

We can see clearly enough that letters or collocations of letters do by various degrees of strength or weakness, length or shortness, emphasis or pitch, become the natural expressions of the finer parts of human feeling or thought. And not only so, but letters themselves have a significance; as Plato observes that the letter ῥ is expressive of motion, the letters δ and τ of binding and rest, the letter λ of smoothness, ν of inwardness, the letter η of length, the letter ο of roundness. These were often combined so as to form composite notions, as for example in τρόμος (trembling), τραχύς (rugged), θραύειν (crush), κρούειν (strike), θρύπτειν (break), ῥυμβεῖν (whirl),— in all which words we notice a parallel composition of sounds in their English equivalents. Plato also remarks, as we remark, that the onomatopoetic principle is far from prevailing uniformly, and further that no explanation of language consistently corresponds with any system of philosophy, however great may be the light which language throws upon the nature of the mind. Both in Greek and English we find groups of words such as string, swing, sling, spring, sting, which are parallel to one another and may be said to derive their vocal effect partly from contrast of letters, but in which it is impossible to assign a precise amount of meaning to each of the expressive and onomatopoetic letters. A few of them are directly imitative, as for example the ω in ᾠόν, which represents the round form of the egg by the figure of the mouth: or βροντή (thunder), in which the fulness of the sound of the word corresponds to the thing signified by it; or βόμβος (buzzing), of which the first syllable, as in its English equivalent, has the meaning of a deep sound. We may observe

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also (as we see in the case of the poor stammerer) that speech has the co-operation of the whole body and may be often assisted or half expressed by gesticulation. A sound or word is not the work of the vocal organs only; nearly the whole of the upper part of the human frame, including head, chest, lungs, have a share in creating it; and it may be accompanied by a movement of the eyes, nose, fingers, hands, feet which contributes to the effect of it.

The principle of onomatopea has fallen into discredit, partly because it has been supposed to imply an actual manufacture of words out of syllables and letters, like a piece of joiner's work,—a theory of language which is more and more refuted by facts, and more and more going out of fashion with philologians; and partly also because the traces of onomatopea in separate words become almost obliterated in the course of ages. The poet of language cannot put in and pull out letters, as a painter might insert or blot out a shade of colour to give effect to his picture. It would be ridiculous for him to alter any received form of a word in order to render it more expressive of the sense. He can only select, perhaps out of some dialect, the form which is already best adapted to his purpose. The true onomatopea is not a creative, but a formative principle, which in the later stage of the history of language ceases to act upon individual words; but still works through the collocation of them in the sentence or paragraph, and the adaptation of every word, syllable, letter to one another and to the rhythm of the whole passage.

iv. Next, under a distinct head, although not separable from the preceding, may be considered the differentiation of languages, *i. e.* the manner in which differences of meaning and form have arisen in them. Into their first creation we have ceased to enquire: it is their aftergrowth with which we are now concerned. How did the roots or substantial portions of words become modified or inflected? and how did they receive separate meanings? First we remark that words are attracted by the sounds and senses of other words, so that they form groups of nouns and verbs analogous in sound and sense to one another, each noun or verb putting forth inflexions, generally of two or three patterns, and with exceptions. We do not say that we know

how sense became first allied to sound; but we have no difficulty in ascertaining how the sounds and meanings of words were in time parted off or differentiated. (1) The chief causes which regulate the variations of sound are (*a*) double or differing analogies, which lead sometimes to one form, sometimes to another; (*b*) euphony, by which is meant chiefly the greater pleasure to the ear and the greater facility to the organs of speech which is given by a new formation or pronunciation of a word; (*c*) the necessity of finding new expressions for new classes or processes of things. We are told that changes of sound take place by innumerable gradations until a whole tribe or community or society find themselves acquiescing in a new pronunciation or use of language. Yet no one observes the change, or is at all aware that in the course of a lifetime he and his contemporaries have appreciably varied their intonation or use of words. On the other hand, the necessities of language seem to require that the intermediate sounds or meanings of words should quickly become fixed or set and not continue in a state of transition (see above, p. 303). The process of settling down is aided by the organs of speech and by the use of writing and printing. (2) The meaning of words varies because ideas vary or the number of things which is included under them or with which they are associated is increased. A single word is thus made to do duty for many more things than were formerly expressed by it; and it parts into different senses when the classes of things or ideas which are represented by it are themselves different and distinct. A figurative use of a word may easily pass into a new sense: a new meaning caught up by association may become more important than all the rest. The good or neutral sense of a word, such as Jesuit, Puritan, Methodist, Heretic, has been often converted into a bad one by the malevolence of party spirit. Double forms suggest different meanings and are often used to express them; and the form or accent of a word has been not unfrequently altered when there is a difference of meaning. The difference of gender in nouns is utilized for the same reason. New meanings of words push themselves into the vacant spaces of language and retire when they are no longer needed. Language equally abhors vacancy and superfluity. But the remedial measures by which both

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are eliminated are not due to any conscious action of the human mind; nor is the force exerted by them constraining or necessary.

(7) We have shown that language, although subject to laws, is far from being of an exact and uniform nature. We may now speak briefly of the faults of language. They may be compared to the faults of Geology, in which different strata cross one another or meet at an angle, or mix with one another either by slow transitions or by violent convulsions, leaving many lacunae which can be no longer filled up, and often becoming so complex that no true explanation of them can be given. So in language there are the cross influences of meaning and sound, of logic and grammar, of differing analogies, of words and the inflexions of words, which often come into conflict with each other. The grammarian, if he were to form new words, would make them all of the same pattern according to what he conceives to be the rule, that is, the more common usage of language. The subtlety of nature goes far beyond art, and it is complicated by irregularity, so that often we can hardly say that there is a right or wrong in the formation of words. For almost any formation which is not at variance with the first principles of language is possible and may be defended.

The imperfection of language is really due to the formation and correlation of words by accident, that is to say, by principles which are unknown to us. Hence we see why Plato, like ourselves unable to comprehend the whole of language, was constrained to 'supplement the poor creature imitation by another poor creature convention.' But the poor creature convention in the end proves too much for all the rest: for we do not ask what is the origin of words or whether they are formed according to a correct analogy, but what is the usage of them; and we are compelled to admit with Hermogenes in Plato and with Horace that usage is the ruling principle, 'quem penes arbitrium est, et jus et norma loquendi.'

(8) There are two ways in which a language may attain permanence or fixity. First, it may have been embodied in poems or hymns or laws, which may be repeated for hundreds, perhaps for thousands of years with a religious accuracy, so that to the priests or rhapsodists of a nation the whole or the greater

part of a language is literally preserved; secondly, it may be written down and in a written form distributed more or less widely among the whole nation. In either case the language which is familiarly spoken may have grown up wholly or in a great measure independently of them. (1) The first of these processes has been sometimes attended by the result that the sound of the words has been carefully preserved and that the meaning of them has either perished wholly, or is only doubtfully recovered by the efforts of modern philology. The verses have been repeated as a chant or part of a ritual, but they have had no relation to ordinary life or speech. (2) The invention of writing again is commonly attributed to a particular epoch, and we are apt to think that such an inestimable gift would have immediately been diffused over a whole country. But it may have taken a long time to perfect the art of writing, and another long period may have elapsed before it came into common use. Its influence on language has been increased ten, twenty or one hundred fold by the invention of printing.

Before the growth of poetry or the invention of writing, languages were only dialects. So they continued to be in parts of the country in which writing was not used or in which there was no diffusion of literature. In most of the counties of England there is still a provincial style, which has been sometimes made by a great poet the vehicle of his fancies. When a book sinks into the mind of a nation, such as Luther's Bible or the Authorized English Translation of the Bible, or again great classical works like Shakspere or Milton, not only have new powers of expression been diffused through a whole nation, but a great step towards uniformity has been made. The instinct of language demands regular grammar and correct spelling: these are imprinted deeply on the tablets of a nation's memory by a common use of classical or of popular writers. In our own day we have attained to a point at which nearly every printed book is spelt correctly and written grammatically.

(9) Proceeding further to trace the influence of literature on language we note some other causes which have affected the higher use of it: such as (1) the necessity of clearness and connection; (2) the fear of tautology; (3) the influence of metre,

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rhythm, rhyme, and of the language of prose and verse upon one another; (4) the power of idiom and quotation; (5) the relativeness of words to one another.

It has been usual to depreciate modern languages when compared with ancient. The latter are regarded as furnishing a type of excellence to which the former cannot attain. But the truth seems to be that modern languages, if through the loss of inflections and genders they lack some power or beauty or expressiveness or precision which is possessed by the ancient, are in many other respects superior to them: the thought is generally clearer, the connection closer, the sentence and paragraph are better distributed. The best modern languages, for example English or French, possess as great a power of self-improvement as the Latin, if not as the Greek. Nor does there seem to be any reason why they should ever decline or decay. It is a popular remark that our great writers are beginning to disappear: it may also be remarked that whenever a great writer appears in the future he will find the English language as perfect and as ready for use as in the days of Shakspere or Milton. There is no reason to suppose that English or French will ever be reduced to the low level of Modern Greek or of Mediaeval Latin. The wide diffusion of great authors would make such a decline impossible. Nor will modern languages be easily broken up by amalgamation with each other. The distance between them is too wide to be spanned, the differences are too great to be overcome, and the use of printing makes it impossible that one of them should ever be lost in another.

The structure of the English language differs greatly from that of either Latin or Greek. In the two latter, especially in Greek, sentences are joined together by connecting particles. They are distributed on the right hand and on the left by *μέν*, *δέ*, *ἀλλά*, *καίτοι*, *καὶ δή* and the like, or deduced from one another by *ἄρα*, *δή*, *οὖν*, *τοίνυν* and the like. In English the majority of sentences are independent and in apposition to one another; they are laid side by side or slightly connected by the copula. But within the sentence the expression of the logical relations of the clauses is closer and more exact: there is less of apposition and participial structure. The sentences thus laid side by side are also constructed into paragraphs; these again are

less distinctly marked in Greek and Latin than in English. Generally French, German, and English have an advantage over the classical languages in point of accuracy. The three concords are more accurately observed in English than in either Greek or Latin. On the other hand, the extension of the familiar use of the masculine and feminine gender to objects of sense and abstract ideas as well as to men and animals no doubt lends a nameless grace to style which we have a difficulty in appreciating, and the possible variety in the order of words gives more flexibility and also a kind of dignity to the period. Of the comparative effect of accent and quantity and of the different use and varying relation of one to the other in ancient and modern languages we are not able to judge.

Another quality in which modern are superior to ancient languages is freedom from tautology. No English style is thought tolerable in which, except for the sake of emphasis, the same words are repeated at short intervals. Of course the length of the interval must depend on the character of the word. Striking words and expressions cannot be allowed to reappear, if at all, except at the distance of a page or more. Pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions may or rather must recur in successive lines. It seems to be a kind of impertinence to the reader and strikes unpleasantly both on the mind and on the ear that the same sounds should be used twice over, when another word or turn of expression would have given a new shade of meaning to the thought and would have added a pleasing variety to the sound. And we equally reject the repetition of the word and the use of a mere synonym for it,—e. g. felicity and happiness. The cultivated mind desires something more, which a skilful writer is easily able to supply out of his treasure-house.

The fear of tautology has doubtless led to the multiplications of words and the meanings of words, and generally to an enlargement of the vocabulary. It is a very early instinct of language; for ancient poetry is almost as free from tautology as the best modern writings. The speech of young children, except in so far as they are compelled to repeat themselves by the fewness of their words, also escapes from it. When they grow up and have ideas which are beyond their powers of

expression, especially in writing, tautology begins to appear. In like manner when language is 'contaminated' by philosophy it is apt to become awkward, to stammer and repeat itself, to lose its flow and freedom. No philosophical writer with the exception of Plato, who is himself not free from tautology, and perhaps Bacon, has attained to any high degree of literary excellence.

To poetry the form and polish of language is chiefly to be attributed; and the most critical period in the history of language is the transition from verse to prose. At first mankind were contented to express their thoughts in a set form of words having a kind of rhythm; to which regularity was given by accent and quantity. But after a time they demanded a greater degree of freedom, and to those who had all their life been hearing poetry the first introduction of prose had the charm of novelty. The prose romances into which the Homeric Poems were converted, for a while probably gave more delight to the hearers or readers of them than the Poems themselves. And in time the relation of the two was reversed: the poems which had once been a necessity of the human mind became a luxury: they were now superseded by prose, which in all succeeding ages became the natural vehicle of expression to all mankind. Henceforward prose and poetry formed each other. A comparatively slender link between them was also furnished by proverbs. We may trace in poetry how the simple succession of lines, not without monotony, has passed into a complicated period, and how in prose, rhythm and accent and the order of words and the balance of clauses, sometimes not without a slight admixture of rhyme, make up a new kind of harmony, swelling into strains not less majestic than those of Homer, Virgil, or Dante.

One of the most curious and characteristic features of language, affecting both syntax and style, is idiom. The meaning of the word 'idiom' is that which is peculiar, that which is familiar, the word or expression which strikes us or comes home to us, which is more readily understood or more easily remembered. It is a quality which really exists in infinite degrees, which we turn into differences of kind by applying the term only to conspicuous and striking examples of words or phrases which have this quality. I often supersedes the laws of language or the rules of grammar,

or rather is to be regarded as another law of language which is natural and necessary. The word or phrase which has been repeated many times over is more intelligible and familiar to us than one which is rare, and our familiarity with it more than compensates for incorrectness or inaccuracy in the use of it. Striking expressions also which have moved the hearts of nations or are the precious stones and jewels of great authors partake of the nature of idioms: they are taken out of the sphere of grammar and are exempt from the proprieties of language. Every one knows that we often put words together in a manner which would be intolerable if it were not idiomatic. We cannot argue either about the meaning of words or the use of constructions that because they are used in one connection they will be legitimate in another, unless we allow for this principle. We can bear to have words and sentences used in new senses or in a new order or even a little perverted in meaning when we are quite familiar with them. Quotations are as often applied in a sense which the author did not intend as in that which he did. The parody of the words of Shakspere or of the Bible, which has in it something of the nature of a lie, is far from unpleasing to us. The better known words, even if their meaning be perverted, are more agreeable to us and have a greater power over us. Most of us have experienced a sort of delight and feeling of curiosity when we first came across or when we first used for ourselves a new word or phrase or figure of speech.

There are associations of sound and of sense by which every word is linked to every other. One letter harmonizes with another; every verb or noun derives its meaning, not only from itself, but from the words with which it is associated. Some reflection of them near or distant is embodied in it. In any new use of a word all the existing uses of it have to be considered. Upon these depends the question whether it will bear the proposed extension of meaning or not. According to the famous expression of Luther, 'Words are living creatures, having hands and feet.' When they cease to retain this living power of adaptation, when they are only put together like the parts of a piece of furniture, language becomes unpoetical, inexpressive, dead.

Cratylus.
INTRODUCTION.

Grammars would lead us to suppose that words have a fixed form and sound. Lexicons assign to each word a definite meaning or meanings. They both tend to obscure the fact that the sentence precedes the word and that all language is relative. (1) It is relative to its own context. Its meaning is modified by what has been said before and after in the same or in some other passage: without comparing the context we are not sure whether it is used in the same sense even in two successive sentences. (2) It is relative to facts, to time, place, and occasion: when they are already known to the hearer or reader, they may be presupposed; there is no need to allude to them further. (3) It is relative to the knowledge of the writer and reader or of the speaker and hearer. Except for the sake of order and consecutiveness nothing ought to be expressed which is already commonly or universally known. A word or two may be sufficient to give an intimation to a friend; a long or elaborate speech or composition is required to explain some new idea to a popular audience or to the ordinary reader or to a young pupil. Grammars and dictionaries are not to be despised; for in teaching we need clearness rather than subtlety. But we must not therefore forget that there is also a higher ideal of language in which all is relative — sounds to sounds, words to words, the parts to the whole — in which besides the lesser context of the book or speech, there is also the larger context of history and circumstances 'known and read of all men.'

The study of Comparative Philology has introduced into the world a new science which more than any other binds up man with nature, and distant ages and countries with one another. It may be said to have thrown a light upon all other sciences and upon the nature of the human mind itself. The true conception of it dispels many errors, not only of metaphysics and theology, but also of natural knowledge. Yet it is far from certain that this newly-found science will continue to progress in the same surprising manner as heretofore; or that even if our materials are largely increased, we shall arrive at much more definite conclusions than at present. Like some other branches of knowledge, it may be approaching a point at which it can no longer be profitably studied. But at any rate it has brought back the philosophy of language from theory to fact;

it has passed out of the region of guesses and hypotheses, and has attained the dignity of an Inductive Science. And it is not without practical and political importance. It gives a new interest to distant and subject countries; it brings back the dawning light from one end of the earth to the other. Nations, like individuals, are better understood by us when we know something of their early life; and when they are better understood by us, we feel more kindly towards them. Lastly, we may remember that all knowledge is valuable for its own sake; and we may also hope that a deeper insight into the nature of human speech will give us a greater command of it and enable us to make a nobler use of it[1].

[1] Compare again W. Humboldt, 'Ueber die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues;' M. Müller, 'Lectures on the Science of Language;' Steinthal, 'Einleitung in die Psychologie und Sprachwissenschaft:' and for the latter part of the Essay, Delbrück, 'Study of Language;' Paul's 'Principles of the History of Language:' to the second of these works the author of this Essay is largely indebted.

CRATYLUS.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES, CRATYLUS.

Cratylus.

HERMOGENES, CRATYLUS, SOCRATES.

Steph. *Hermogenes.* SUPPOSE that we make Socrates a party to
383 the argument?

Cratylus. If you please.

Cratylus and Hermogenes have been disputing about names: they refer their dispute to Socrates.

Her. I should explain to you, Socrates, that our friend Cratylus has been arguing about names; he says that they are natural and not conventional; not a portion of the human voice which men agree to use; but that there is a truth or correctness in them, which is the same for Hellenes as for barbarians. Whereupon I ask him, whether his own name of Cratylus is a true name or not, and he answers 'Yes.' And Socrates? 'Yes.' Then every man's name, as I tell him, is that which he is called. To this he replies — 'If all the world were to call you Hermogenes, that would not be your name.' And when I am anxious to have a
384 further explanation he is ironical and mysterious, and seems to imply that he has a notion of his own about the matter, if he would only tell, and could entirely convince me, if he chose to be intelligible. Tell me, Socrates, what this oracle means; or rather tell me, if you will be so good, what is your own view of the truth or correctness of names, which I would far sooner hear.

Socrates not having heard the fifty-drachma course of Prodicus,

Socrates. Son of Hipponicus, there is an ancient saying, that 'hard is the knowledge of the good.' And the knowledge of names is a great part of knowledge. If I had not been poor, I might have heard the fifty-drachma course of the great Prodicus, which is a complete education in

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is incompetent to decide.

grammar and language — these are his own words — and then I should have been at once able to answer your question about the correctness of names. But, indeed, I have only heard the single-drachma course, and therefore, I do not know the truth about such matters; I will, however, gladly assist you and Cratylus in the investigation of them. When he declares that your name is not really Hermogenes, I suspect that he is only making fun of you;— he means to say that you are no true son of Hermes, because you are always looking after a fortune and never in luck. But, as I was saying, there is a good deal of difficulty in this sort of knowledge, and therefore we had better leave the question open until we have heard both sides.

There is no correctness in names other than convention, says Hermogenes.

Her. I have often talked over this matter, both with Cratylus and others, and cannot convince myself that there is any principle of correctness in names other than convention and agreement; any name which you give, in my opinion, is the right one, and if you change that and give another, the new name is as correct as the old — we frequently change the names of our slaves, and the newly-imposed name is as good as the old: for there is no name given to anything by nature; all is convention and habit of the users;— such is my view. But if I am mistaken I shall be happy to hear and learn of Cratylus, or of any one else.

Soc. I dare say that you may be right, Hermogenes: let 38
us see;—Your meaning is, that the name of each thing is only that which anybody agrees to call it?

Her. That is my notion.

Soc. Whether the giver of the name be an individual or a city?

Her. Yes.

Soc. Well, now, let me take an instance;— suppose that I call a man a horse or a horse a man, you mean to say that a man will be rightly called a horse by me individually, and rightly called a man by the rest of the world; and a horse again would be rightly called a man by me and a horse by the world:— that is your meaning?

Her. He would, according to my view.

But how, rejoins Socrates,

Soc. But how about truth, then? you would acknowledge that there is in words a true and a false?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. And there are true and false propositions?

Her. To be sure.

Soc. And a true proposition says that which is, and a false proposition says that which is not?

Her. Yes; what other answer is possible?

Soc. Then in a proposition there is a true and false?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. But is a proposition true as a whole only, and are the parts untrue?

Her. No; the parts are true as well as the whole.

Soc. Would you say the large parts and not the smaller ones, or every part?

Her. I should say that every part is true.

Soc. Is a proposition resolvable into any part smaller than a name?

Her. No; that is the smallest.

Soc. Then the name is a part of the true proposition?

Her. Yes.

Soc. Yes, and a true part, as you say.

Her. Yes.

Soc. And is not the part of a falsehood also a falsehood?

Her. Yes.

Soc. Then, if propositions may be true and false, names may be true and false?

Her. So we must infer.

Soc. And the name of anything is that which any one affirms to be the name?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And will there be so many names of each thing as everybody says that there are? and will they be true names at the time of uttering them?

Her. Yes, Socrates, I can conceive no correctness of names other than this; you give one name, and I another; and in different cities and countries there are different names for the same things; Hellenes differ from barbarians in their use of names, and the several Hellenic tribes from one another.

Soc. But would you say, Hermogenes, that the things
386 differ as the names differ? and are they relative to indi-

is this doctrine consistent with any distinction between truth and falsehood?

If the whole is true, the parts must be true; if propositions, then names.

Cratylus.

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viduals, as Protagoras tells us? For he says that man is the measure of all things, and that things are to me as they appear to me, and that they are to you as they appear to you. Do you agree with him, or would you say that things have a permanent essence of their own?

Is Protagoras right or wrong in his doctrine that 'man is the measure' and that things are as they appear?

Her. There have been times, Socrates, when I have been driven in my perplexity to take refuge with Protagoras; not that I agree with him at all.

Soc. What! have you ever been driven to admit that there was no such thing as a bad man?

Her. No, indeed; but I have often had reason to think that there are very bad men, and a good many of them.

Soc. Well, and have you ever found any very good ones?

Her. Not many.

Soc. Still you have found them?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And would you hold that the very good were the very wise, and the very evil very foolish? Would that be your view?

Her. It would.

Soc. But if Protagoras is right, and the truth is that things are as they appear to any one, how can some of us be wise and some of us foolish?

Her. Impossible.

If there is any difference between good and evil, truth and falsehood, he must be wrong, and Euthydemus, who says that all things belong to all, equally wrong.

Soc. And if, on the other hand, wisdom and folly are really distinguishable, you will allow, I think, that the assertion of Protagoras can hardly be correct. For if what appears to each man is true to him, one man cannot in reality be wiser than another.

Her. He cannot.

Soc. Nor will you be disposed to say with Euthydemus, that all things equally belong to all men at the same moment and always; for neither on his view can there be some good and others bad, if virtue and vice are always equally to be attributed to all.

Her. There cannot.

Soc. But if neither is right, and things are not relative to individuals, and all things do not equally belong to all at the same moment and always, they must be supposed to have their own proper and permanent essence: they are not in

relation to us, or influenced by us, fluctuating according to our fancy, but they are independent, and maintain to their own essence the relation prescribed by nature.

Her. I think, Socrates, that you have said the truth.

Soc. Does what I am saying apply only to the things themselves, or equally to the actions which proceed from them? Are not actions also a class of being?

Things and actions have their own proper nature, and are made or done by a natural process.

Her. Yes, the actions are real as well as the things.

387 *Soc.* Then the actions also are done according to their proper nature, and not according to our opinion of them? In cutting, for example, we do not cut as we please, and with any chance instrument; but we cut with the proper instrument only, and according to the natural process of cutting; and the natural process is right and will succeed, but any other will fail and be of no use at all.

Her. I should say that the natural way is the right way.

Soc. Again, in burning, not every way is the right way; but the right way is the natural way, and the right instrument the natural instrument.

Her. True.

Soc. And this holds good of all actions?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And speech is a kind of action?

Her. True.

This principle applied to speech.

Soc. And will a man speak correctly who speaks as he pleases? Will not the successful speaker rather be he who speaks in the natural way of speaking, and as things ought to be spoken, and with the natural instrument? Any other mode of speaking will result in error and failure.

Her. I quite agree with you.

Soc. And is not naming a part of speaking? for in giving names men speak.

Her. That is true.

Soc. And if speaking is a sort of action and has a relation to acts, is not naming also a sort of action?

Her. True.

Soc. And we saw that actions were not relative to ourselves, but had a special nature of their own?

Her. Precisely.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

The several arts have their own proper instruments.

Soc. Then the argument would lead us to infer that names ought to be given according to a natural process, and with a proper instrument, and not at our pleasure: in this and no other way shall we name with success.

Her. I agree.

Soc. But again, that which has to be cut has to be cut with something?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And that which has to be woven or pierced has to be woven or pierced with something?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. And that which has to be named has to be named with something?

Her. True.

Soc. What is that with which we pierce?

Her. An awl.

Soc. And with which we weave? 388

Her. A shuttle.

Soc. And with which we name?

Her. A name.

Soc. Very good: then a name is an instrument?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. Suppose that I ask, 'What sort of instrument is a shuttle?' And you answer, 'A weaving instrument.'

Her. Well.

Soc. And I ask again, 'What do we do when we weave?' —The answer is, that we separate or disengage the warp from the woof.

Her. Very true.

Soc. And may not a similar description be given of an awl, and of instruments in general?

Her. To be sure.

Soc. And now suppose that I ask a similar question about names: will you answer me? Regarding the name as an instrument, what do we do when we name?

Her. I cannot say.

Soc. Do we not give information to one another, and distinguish things according to their natures?

Her. Certainly we do.

Soc. Then a name is an instrument of teaching and of

distinguishing natures, as the shuttle is of distinguishing the threads of the web.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. Yes.

Soc. And the shuttle is the instrument of the weaver?

Her. Assuredly.

A name is the instrument which teaches and distinguishes natures.

Soc. Then the weaver will use the shuttle well — and well means like a weaver? and the teacher will use the name well — and well means like a teacher?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And when the weaver uses the shuttle, whose work will he be using well?

Her. That of the carpenter.

Soc. And is every man a carpenter, or the skilled only?

Her. Only the skilled.

And as the other arts use the work of others, so the teacher uses the work of the legislator, who is the maker of names.

Soc. And when the piercer uses the awl, whose work will he be using well?

Her. That of the smith.

Soc. And is every man a smith, or only the skilled?

Her. The skilled only.

Soc. And when the teacher uses the name, whose work will he be using?

Her. There again I am puzzled.

Soc. Cannot you at least say who gives us the names which we use?

Her. Indeed I cannot.

Soc. Does not the law seem to you to give us them?

Her. Yes, I suppose so.

Soc. Then the teacher, when he gives us a name, uses the work of the legislator?

Her. I agree.

Soc. And is every man a legislator, or the skilled only?

Her. The skilled only.

Soc. Then, Hermogenes, not every man is able to give
389 a name, but only a maker of names; and this is the legislator, who of all skilled artisans in the world is the rarest.

Her. True.

Soc. And how does the legislator make names? and to what does he look? Consider this in the light of the previous instances: to what does the carpenter look in

making the shuttle? Does he not look to that which is naturally fitted to act as a shuttle?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. And suppose the shuttle to be broken in making, will he make another, looking to the broken one? or will he look to the form according to which he made the other?

The carpenter in making the shuttle looks to the idea or natural form of the shuttle, being such as is best adapted to each kind of work.

Her. To the latter, I should imagine.

Soc. Might not that be justly called the true or ideal shuttle?

Her. I think so.

Soc. And whatever shuttles are wanted, for the manufacture of garments, thin or thick, of flaxen, woollen, or other material, ought all of them to have the true form of the shuttle; and whatever is the shuttle best adapted to each kind of work, that ought to be the form which the maker produces in each case.

Her. Yes.

Soc. And the same holds of other instruments: when a man has discovered the instrument which is naturally adapted to each work, he must express this natural form, and not others which he fancies, in the material, whatever it may be, which he employs; for example, he ought to know how to put into iron the forms of awls adapted by nature to their several uses?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. And how to put into wood forms of shuttles adapted by nature to their uses?

Her. True.

Soc. For the several forms of shuttles naturally answer to the several kinds of webs; and this is true of instruments in general.

Her. Yes.

And so the legislator looks to the true form or expression of things in sounds and syllables, though, like the carpenter, he may

Soc. Then, as to names: ought not our legislator also to know how to put the true natural name of each thing into sounds and syllables, and to make and give all names with a view to the ideal name, if he is to be a namer in any true sense? And we must remember that different legislators will not use the same syllables. For neither does every smith, although he may be making the same instrument for the same purpose, make them all of the same iron. The

form must be the same, but the material may vary, and still the instrument may be equally good of whatever iron made, 390 whether in Hellas or in a foreign country;—there is no difference.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

work in different materials.

Her. Very true.

Soc. And the legislator, whether he be Hellene or barbarian, is not therefore to be deemed by you a worse legislator, provided he gives the true and proper form of the name in whatever syllables; this or that country makes no matter.

Her. Quite true.

This true form is determined by the user.

Soc. But who then is to determine whether the proper form is given to the shuttle, whatever sort of wood may be used? the carpenter who makes, or the weaver who is to use them?

Her. I should say, he who is to use them, Socrates.

Soc. And who uses the work of the lyre-maker? Will not he be the man who knows how to direct what is being done, and who will know also whether the work is being well done or not?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. And who is he?

Her. The player of the lyre.

Soc. And who will direct the shipwright?

Her. The pilot.

Soc. And who will be best able to direct the legislator in his work, and will know whether the work is well done, in this or any other country? Will not the user be the man?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And this is he who knows how to ask questions?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And how to answer them?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And him who knows how to ask and answer you would call a dialectician?

Her. Yes; that would be his name.

Soc. Then the work of the carpenter is to make a rudder, and the pilot has to direct him, if the rudder is to be well made.

Her. True.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Soc. And the work of the legislator is to give names, and the dialectician must be his director if the names are to be rightly given?

Her. That is true.

Soc. Then, Hermogenes, I should imagine this giving of names to be no such light matter as you fancy, or the work of light or chance persons; and Cratylus is right in saying that things have names by nature, and that not every man is an artificer of names, but he only who looks to the name which each thing by nature has, and is able to express the true forms of things in letters and syllables.

Socrates cannot answer of himself the question, 'What is the natural fitness of names?' The enquiry must be shared between them.

Her. I cannot answer you, Socrates; but I find a difficulty in changing my opinion all in a moment, and I think that I should be more readily persuaded, if you would show me what this is which you term the natural fitness of names. 39

Soc. My good Hermogenes, I have none to show. Was I not telling you just now (but you have forgotten), that I knew nothing, and proposing to share the enquiry with you? But now that you and I have talked over the matter, a step has been gained; for we have discovered that names have by nature a truth, and that not every man knows how to give a thing a name.

Her. Very good.

Soc. And what is the nature of this truth or correctness of names? That, if you care to know, is the next question.

Her. Certainly, I care to know.

Soc. Then reflect.

Her. How shall I reflect?

The irony of Socrates:—'We must learn of the Sophists.'

Soc. The true way is to have the assistance of those who know, and you must pay them well both in money and in thanks; these are the Sophists, of whom your brother, Callias, has — rather dearly — bought the reputation of wisdom. But you have not yet come into your inheritance, and therefore you had better go to him, and beg and entreat him to tell you what he has learnt from Protagoras about the fitness of names.

Her. But how inconsistent should I be, if, whilst repudiating Protagoras and his truth[1], I were to attach any value to what he and his book affirm!

[1] 'Truth' was the title of the book of Protagoras; cp. Theaet. 161 E.

Soc. Then if you despise him, you must learn of Homer and the poets.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. And where does Homer say anything about names, and what does he say?

'If not of the Sophists, of the poets, then.'

Soc. He often speaks of them; notably and nobly in the places where he distinguishes the different names which Gods and men give to the same things. Does he not in these passages make a remarkable statement about the correctness of names? For the Gods must clearly be supposed to call things by their right and natural names; do you not think so?

The Homeric distinction of the different names given by Gods and men to the same things.

Her. Why, of course they call them rightly, if they call them at all. But to what are you referring?

Soc. Do you not know what he says about the river in Troy who had a single combat with Hephaestus?

'Whom,' as he says, 'the Gods call Xanthus, and men call Scamander.'

Xanthus and Scamander.

392 *Her.* I remember.

Soc. Well, and about this river—to know that he ought to be called Xanthus and not Scamander—is not that a solemn lesson? Or about the bird which, as he says,

'The Gods call Chalcis, and men Cymindis:'

Chalcis and Cymindis.

to be taught how much more correct the name Chalcis is than the name Cymindis,—do you deem that a light matter? Or about Batieia and Myrina[1]? And there are many other observations of the same kind in Homer and other poets. Now, I think that this is beyond the understanding of you and me; but the names of Scamandrius and Astyanax, which he affirms to have been the names of Hector's son, are more within the range of human faculties, as I am disposed to think; and what the poet means by correctness may be more readily apprehended in that instance: you will remember I dare say the lines to which I refer[2].

Batieia and Myrina.

Her. I do.

Soc. Let me ask you, then, which did Homer think the more correct of the names given to Hector's son—Astyanax or Scamandrius?

Astyanax and Scamandrius.

[1] Cp. Il. ii. 813, 814:—

'The hill which men call Batieia and the immortals the tomb of the sportive Myrina.'

[2] Il. vi. 402.

Cratylus.

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Her. I do not know.

Soc. How would you answer, if you were asked whether the wise or the unwise are more likely to give correct names?

Her. I should say the wise, of course.

Soc. And are the men or the women of a city, taken as a class, the wiser?

Her. I should say, the men.

Soc. And Homer, as you know, says that the Trojan men called him Astyanax (king of the city); but if the men called him Astyanax, the other name of Scamandrius could only have been given to him by the women.

Her. That may be inferred.

Soc. And must not Homer have imagined the Trojans to be wiser than their wives?

Her. To be sure.

Soc. Then he must have thought Astyanax to be a more correct name for the boy than Scamandrius?

Her. Clearly.

Soc. And what is the reason of this? Let us consider:—does he not himself suggest a very good reason, when he says,

> 'For he alone defended their city and long walls'?

This appears to be a good reason for calling the son of the saviour king of the city which his father was saving, as Homer observes.

Her. I see.

Soc. Why, Hermogenes, I do not as yet see myself; and do you?

Her. No, indeed; not I.

Hector.

Soc. But tell me, friend, did not Homer himself also give 39
Hector his name?

Her. What of that?

Soc. The name appears to me to be very nearly the same as the name of Astyanax — both are Hellenic; and a king (ἄναξ) and a holder (ἕκτωρ) have nearly the same meaning, and are both descriptive of a king; for a man is clearly the holder of that of which he is king; he rules, and owns, and holds it. But, perhaps, you may think that I am talking

nonsense; and indeed I believe that I myself did not know what I meant when I imagined that I had found some indication of the opinion of Homer about the correctness of names.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. I assure you that I think otherwise, and I believe you to be on the right track.

Soc. There is reason, I think, in calling the lion's whelp a lion, and the foal of a horse a horse; I am speaking only of the ordinary course of nature, when an animal produces after his kind[1], and not of extraordinary births;—if contrary to nature a horse have a calf, then I should not call that a foal but a calf; nor do I call any inhuman birth a man, but only a natural birth. And the same may be said of trees and other things. Do you agree with me?

Her. Yes, I agree.

The addition or subtraction of a letter or two makes no difference if the principal meaning is retained.

Soc. Very good. But you had better watch me and see that I do not play tricks with you. For on the same principle the son of a king is to be called a king. And whether the syllables of the name are the same or not the same, makes no difference, provided the meaning is retained; nor does the addition or subtraction of a letter make any difference so long as the essence of the thing remains in possession of the name and appears in it.

Her. What do you mean?

Soc. A very simple matter. I may illustrate my meaning by the names of letters, which you know are not the same as the letters themselves with the exception of the four, *ε*, *υ*, *ο*, *ω*; the names of the rest, whether vowels or consonants, are made up of other letters which we add to them; but so long as we introduce the meaning, and there can be no mistake, the name of the letter is quite correct. Take, for example, the letter *beta*—the addition of *η*, *τ*, *α*, gives no offence, and does not prevent the whole name from having the value which the legislator intended—so well did he know how to give the letters names.

Her. I believe you are right.

Sons usually bear the names of their fathers, yet

394 *Soc.* And may not the same be said of a king? a king will often be the son of a king, the good son or the noble son of a good or noble sire; and similarly the offspring of every

[1] Reading

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

they may be considerably transformed; as before in the case of animals. Other instances.

kind, in the regular course of nature, is like the parent, and therefore has the same name. Yet the syllables may be disguised until they appear different to the ignorant person, and he may not recognize them, although they are the same, just as any one of us would not recognize the same drugs under different disguises of colour and smell, although to the physician, who regards the power of them, they are the same, and he is not put out by the addition; and in like manner the etymologist is not put out by the addition or transposition or subtraction of a letter or two, or indeed by the change of all the letters, for this need not interfere with the meaning. As was just now said, the names of Hector and Astyanax have only one letter alike, which is the τ, and yet they have the same meaning. And how little in common with the letters of their names has Archepolis (ruler of the city)—and yet the meaning is the same. And there are many other names which just mean 'king.' Again, there are several names for a general, as, for example, Agis (leader) and Polemarchus (chief in war) and Eupolemus (good warrior); and others which denote a physician, as Iatrocles (famous healer) and Acesimbrotus (curer of mortals); and there are many others which might be cited, differing in their syllables and letters, but having the same meaning. Would you not say so?

Her. Yes.

Soc. The same names, then, ought to be assigned to those who follow in the course of nature?

Her. Yes.

But when the nature of the son changes, his name should be changed.

Soc. And what of those who follow out of the course of nature, and are prodigies? for example, when a good and religious man has an irreligious son, he ought to bear the name not of his father, but of the class to which he belongs, just as in the case which was before supposed of a horse foaling a calf.

Her. Quite true.

Soc. Then the irreligious son of a religious father should be called irreligious?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. He should not be called Theophilus (beloved of God) or Mnesitheus (mindful of God), or any of these names: if

names are correctly given, his should have an opposite meaning. *Cratylus.*

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. Certainly, Socrates.

Soc. Again, Hermogenes, there is Orestes (the man of the mountains) who appears to be rightly called; whether chance gave the name, or perhaps some poet who meant to express the brutality and fierceness and mountain wildness of his hero's nature. Orestes.

395 *Her.* That is very likely, Socrates.

Soc. And his father's name is also according to nature.

Her. Clearly.

Soc. Yes, for as his name, so also is his nature; Agamemnon (admirable for remaining) is one who is patient and persevering in the accomplishment of his resolves, and by his virtue crowns them; and his continuance at Troy with all the vast army is a proof of that admirable endurance in him which is signified by the name Agamemnon[1]. I also think that Atreus is rightly called; for his murder of Chrysippus and his exceeding cruelty to Thyestes are damaging and destructive to his reputation — the name is a little altered and disguised so as not to be intelligible to every one, but to the etymologist there is no difficulty in seeing the meaning, for whether you think of him as *ἀτειρὴς* the stubborn, or as *ἄτρεστος* the fearless, or as *ἀτηρὸς* the destructive one, the name is perfectly correct in every point of view. And I think that Pelops is also named appropriately; for, as the name implies, he is rightly called Pelops who sees what is near only (*ὁ τὰ πέλας ὁρῶν*). Agamemnon. Atreus. Pelops.

Her. How so?

Soc. Because, according to the tradition, he had no forethought or foresight of all the evil which the murder of Myrtilus would entail upon his whole race in remote ages; he saw only what was at hand and immediate,— or in other words, *πέλας* (near), in his eagerness to win Hippodamia by all means for his bride. Every one would agree that the name of Tantalus is rightly given and in accordance with nature, if the traditions about him are true. Tantalus.

Her. And what are the traditions?

[1] *Ἀγαμέμνων = ἀγαστὸς μένων.*

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Soc. Many terrible misfortunes are said to have happened to him in his life — last of all, came the utter ruin of his country; and after his death he had the stone suspended (ταλαντεία) over his head in the world below — all this agrees wonderfully well with his name. You might imagine that some person who wanted to call him ταλάντατος (the most weighed down by misfortune), disguised the name by altering it into Tantalus; and into this form, by some accident of tradition, it has actually been transmuted. The name of Zeus, who is his alleged father, has also an excellent meaning, although hard to be understood, because really like a sentence, which is divided into two parts, for some call him Zena (Ζῆνα), and use the one half, and others who use the other half call him Dia (Δία); the two together signify the nature of the God, and the business of a name, as we were saying, is to express the nature. For there is none who is more the author of life to us and to all, than the lord and king of all. Wherefore we are right in calling him Zena and Dia, which are one name, although divided, meaning the God through whom all creatures always have life (δι' ὃν ζῆν ἀεὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ζῶσιν ὑπάρχει). There is an irreverence, at first sight, in calling him son of Cronos (who is a proverb for stupidity), and we might rather expect Zeus to be the child of a mighty intellect. Which is the fact; for this is the meaning of his father's name: Κρόνος quasi Κόρος (κορέω, to sweep), not in the sense of a youth, but signifying τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀκήρατον τοῦ νοῦ, the pure and garnished mind (sc. ἀπὸ τοῦ κορεῖν). He, as we are informed by tradition, was begotten of Uranus, rightly so called (ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁρᾶν τὰ ἄνω) from looking upwards; which, as philosophers tell us, is the way to have a pure mind, and the name Uranus is therefore correct. If I could remember the genealogy of Hesiod, I would have gone on and tried more conclusions of the same sort on the remoter ancestors of the Gods,— then I might have seen whether this wisdom, which has come to me all in an instant, I know not whence, will or will not hold good to the end.

The name of Zeus is a sentence in itself.

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Cronos.

Uranus.

Her. You seem to me, Socrates, to be quite like a prophet newly inspired, and to be uttering oracles.

Soc. Yes, Hermogenes, and I believe that I caught the inspiration from the great Euthyphro of the Prospaltian

deme, who gave me a long lecture which commenced at dawn: he talked and I listened, and his wisdom and enchanting ravishment has not only filled my ears but taken possession of my soul, and to-day I shall let his superhuman power work and finish the investigation of names — that will be the thing to do; but to-morrow, if you are so disposed, we will conjure him away, and make a purgation of him, if we can only find some priest or sophist who is skilled in
397 purifications of this sort.

Her. With all my heart; for I am very curious to hear the rest of the enquiry about names.

Soc. Then let us proceed; and where would you have us begin, now that we have got a sort of outline of the enquiry? Are there any names which witness of themselves that they are not given arbitrarily, but have a natural fitness? The names of heroes and of men in general are apt to be deceptive because they are often called after ancestors with whose names, as we were saying, they may have no business; or they are the expression of a wish like Eutychides (the son of good fortune), or Sosias (the Saviour), or Theophilus (the beloved of God), and others. But I think that we had better leave these, for there will be more chance of finding correctness in the names of immutable essences;— there ought to have been more care taken about them when they were named, and perhaps there may have been some more than human power at work occasionally in giving them names.

Her. I think so, Socrates.

Soc. Ought we not to begin with the consideration of the Gods, and show that they are rightly named Gods?

Her. Yes, that will be well.

Soc. My notion would be something of this sort:—I suspect that the sun, moon, earth, stars, and heaven, which are still the Gods of many barbarians, were the only Gods known to the aboriginal Hellenes. Seeing that they were always moving and running, from their running nature they were called Gods or runners (*θεοὺς, θέοντας*); and when men became acquainted with the other Gods, they proceeded to apply the same name to them all. Do you think that likely?

The Gods were originally only the stars; and as they were always running about they were called *θεοί*.

Her. I think it very likely indeed.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Demons.

Soc. What shall follow the Gods?

Her. Must not demons and heroes and men come next?

Soc. Demons! And what do you consider to be the meaning of this word? Tell me if my view is right.

Her. Let me hear.

Soc. You know how Hesiod uses the word?

Her. I do not.

Soc. Do you not remember that he speaks of a golden race of men who came first?

Her. Yes, I do.

Soc. He says of them—

> 'But now that fate has closed over this race
> They are holy demons upon the earth,
> Beneficent, averters of ills, guardians of mortal men[1].'

Her. What is the inference? 39

Soc. What is the inference! Why, I suppose that he means by the golden men, not men literally made of gold, but good and noble; and I am convinced of this, because he further says that we are the iron race.

Her. Very true.

Soc. And do you not suppose that good men of our own day would by him be said to be of golden race?

Her. Very likely.

Soc. And are not the good wise?

Her. Yes, they are wise.

Soc. And therefore I have the most entire conviction that he called them demons, because they were *δαήμονες* (knowing or wise), and in our older Attic dialect the word itself occurs. Now he and other poets say truly, that when a good man dies he has honour and a mighty portion among the dead, and becomes a demon; which is a name given to him signifying wisdom. And I say too, that every wise man who happens to be a good man is more than human (*δαιμόνιον*) both in life and death, and is rightly called a demon.

Heroes.

Her. Then I rather think that I am of one mind with you; but what is the meaning of the word 'hero'? (*ἥρως*, in the old writing *ἔρως*.)

[1] Hesiod, Works and Days, 120 foll.

Cratylus. SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Soc. I think that there is no difficulty in explaining, for the name is not much altered, and signifies that they were born of love.

Her. What do you mean?

Soc. Do you not know that the heroes are demigods?

Her. What then?

Soc. All of them sprang either from the love of a God for a mortal woman, or of a mortal man for a Goddess; think of the word in the old Attic, and you will see better that the name heros is only a slight alteration of Eros, from whom the heroes sprang: either this is the meaning, or, if not this, then they must have been skilful as rhetoricians and dialecticians, and able to put the question (ἐρωτᾶν), for εἴρειν is equivalent to λέγειν. And therefore, as I was saying, in the Attic dialect the heroes turn out to be rhetoricians and questioners. All this is easy enough; the noble breed of heroes are a tribe of sophists and rhetors. But can you tell me why men are called ἄνθρωποι? — that is more difficult.

Her. No, I cannot; and I would not try even if I could, because I think that you are the more likely to succeed.

399 *Soc.* That is to say, you trust to the inspiration of Euthyphro.

Her. Of course.

Soc. Your faith is not vain; for at this very moment a new and ingenious thought strikes me, and, if I am not careful, before to-morrow's dawn I shall be wiser than I ought to be. Now, attend to me; and first, remember that we often put in and pull out letters in words, and give names as we please and change the accents. Take, for example, the word Διὶ φίλος; in order to convert this from a sentence into a noun, we omit one of the iotas and sound the middle syllable grave instead of acute; as, on the other hand, letters are sometimes inserted in words instead of being omitted, and the acute takes the place of the grave.

Her. That is true.

Soc. The name ἄνθρωπος, which was once a sentence, and is now a noun, appears to be a case just of this sort, for one letter, which is the *a*, has been omitted, and the acute on the last syllable has been changed to a grave. ἄνθρωπος.

Her. What do you mean?

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Soc. I mean to say that the word 'man' implies that other animals never examine, or consider, or look up at what they see, but that man not only sees (ὄπωπε) but considers and looks up at that which he sees, and hence he alone of all animals is rightly called ἄνθρωπος, meaning ἀναθρῶν ἃ ὄπωπεν.

Her. May I ask you to examine another word about which I am curious?

Soc. Certainly.

Her. I will take that which appears to me to follow next in order. You know the distinction of soul and body?

Soc. Of course.

Her. Let us endeavour to analyze them like the previous words.

ψυχή.

Soc. You want me first of all to examine the natural fitness of the word ψυχὴ (soul), and then of the word σῶμα (body)?

Her. Yes.

Soc. If I am to say what occurs to me at the moment, I should imagine that those who first used the name ψυχὴ meant to express that the soul when in the body is the source of life, and gives the power of breath and revival (ἀναψῦχον), and when this reviving power fails then the body perishes and dies, and this, if I am not mistaken, they called psyche. But please stay a moment; I fancy that I can discover something which will be more acceptable to the disciples of Euthyphro, for I am afraid that they will scorn 400
this explanation. What do you say to another?

Her. Let me hear.

Soc. What is that which holds and carries and gives life and motion to the entire nature of the body? What else but the soul?

Her. Just that.

Soc. And do you not believe with Anaxagoras, that mind or soul is the ordering and containing principle of all things?

Her. Yes; I do.

Soc. Then you may well call that power φυσέχη which carries and holds nature (ἡ φύσιν ὀχεῖ καὶ ἔχει), and this may be refined away into ψυχή.

Her. Certainly; and this derivation is, I think, more scientific than the other.

Soc. It is so; but I cannot help laughing, if I am to suppose that this was the true meaning of the name.

SOCRATES, HEMOGENES.

Her. But what shall we say of the next word?

Soc. You mean σῶμα (the body).

Her. Yes.

The irony of Socrates.

σῶμα.

Soc. That may be variously interpreted; and yet more variously if a little permutation is allowed. For some say that the body is the grave (σῆμα) of the soul which may be thought to be buried in our present life; or again the index of the soul, because the soul gives indications to (σημαίνει) the body; probably the Orphic poets were the inventors of the name, and they were under the impression that the soul is suffering the punishment of sin, and that the body is an enclosure or prison in which the soul is incarcerated, kept safe (σῶμα, σώζηται), as the name σῶμα implies, until the penalty is paid; according to this view, not even a letter of the word need be changed.

Her. I think, Socrates, that we have said enough of this class of words. But have we any more explanations of the names of the Gods, like that which you were giving of Zeus? I should like to know whether any similar principle of correctness is to be applied to them.

Soc. Yes, indeed, Hermogenes; and there is one excellent principle which, as men of sense, we must acknowledge,—that of the Gods we know nothing, either of their natures or of the names which they give themselves; but we are sure that the names by which they call themselves, whatever they may be, are true. And this is the best of all principles; and the next best is to say, as in prayers, that we will call them by any sort or kind of names or patronymics which
401 they like, because we do not know of any other. That also, I think, is a very good custom, and one which I should much wish to observe. Let us, then, if you please, in the first place announce to them that we are not enquiring about them; we do not presume that we are able to do so; but we are enquiring about the meaning of men in giving them these names,—in this there can be small blame.

We are not enquiring about the Gods, but only about men's opinions concerning them.

Her. I think, Socrates, that you are quite right, and I would like to do as you say.

Soc. Shall we begin, then, with Hestia, according to custom?

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. Yes, that will be very proper.

Soc. What may we suppose him to have meant who gave the name Hestia?

Her. That is another and certainly a most difficult question.

The first imposers of names were philosophers.

Soc. My dear Hermogenes, the first imposers of names must surely have been considerable persons; they were philosophers, and had a good deal to say.

Her. Well, and what of them?

Soc. They are the men to whom I should attribute the imposition of names. Even in foreign names, if you analyze them, a meaning is still discernible. For example, that which we term *οὐσία* is by some called *ἐσία*, and by others again *ὠσία*. Now that the essence of things should be called *ἑστία*, which is akin to the first of these (*ἐσία* = *ἑστία*), is rational enough. And there is reason in the Athenians calling that *ἑστία* which participates in *οὐσία*. For in ancient times we too seem to have said *ἐσία* for *οὐσία*, and this you may note to have been the idea of those who appointed that sacrifices should be first offered to *ἑστία*, which was natural enough if they meant that *ἑστία* was the essence of things. Those again who read *ὠσία* seem to have inclined to the opinion of Heracleitus, that all things flow and nothing stands; with them the pushing principle (*ὠθοῦν*) is the cause and ruling power of all things, and is therefore rightly called *ὠσία*. Enough of this, which is all that we who know nothing can affirm. Next in order after Hestia we ought to consider Rhea and Cronos, although the name of Cronos has been already discussed. But I dare say that I am talking great nonsense.

οὐσία, called also with good reason *ἐσία* (akin to *ἑστία*) and *ὠσία*.

Her. Why, Socrates?

Soc. My good friend, I have discovered a hive of wisdom.

Her. Of what nature?

Soc. Well, rather ridiculous, and yet plausible.

Her. How plausible?

The flux of Heracleitus confirmed by language.

Soc. I fancy to myself Heracleitus repeating wise traditions of antiquity as old as the days of Cronos and Rhea, and of which Homer also spoke.

Her. How do you mean?

Soc. Heracleitus is supposed to say that all things are in motion and nothing at rest; he compares them to the stream

of a river, and says that you cannot go into the same water twice.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. That is true.

Other names of Gods.

Soc. Well, then, how can we avoid inferring that he who gave the names of Cronos and Rhea to the ancestors of the Gods, agreed pretty much in the doctrine of Heracleitus? Is the giving of the names of streams to both of them purely accidental? Compare the line in which Homer, and, as I believe, Hesiod also, tells of

Cronos and Rhea.

'Ocean, the origin of Gods, and mother Tethys[1].'

And again, Orpheus says, that

'The fair river of Ocean was the first to marry, and he espoused his sister Tethys, who was his mother's daughter.'

You see that this is a remarkable coincidence, and all in the direction of Heracleitus.

Her. I think that there is something in what you say, Socrates; but I do not understand the meaning of the name Tethys.

Tethys.

Soc. Well, that is almost self-explained, being only the name of a spring, a little disguised; for that which is strained and filtered (*διαττώμενον*, *ἠθούμενον*) may be likened to a spring, and the name Tethys is made up of these two words.

Her. The idea is ingenious, Socrates.

Soc. To be sure. But what comes next?—of Zeus we have spoken.

Her. Yes.

Soc. Then let us next take his two brothers, Poseidon and Pluto, whether the latter is called by that or by his other name.

Poseidon.

Her. By all means.

Soc. Poseidon is *ποσίδεσμος*, the chain of the feet; the original inventor of the name had been stopped by the watery element in his walks, and not allowed to go on, and therefore he called the ruler of this element Poseidon; the ε was probably inserted as an ornament. Yet, perhaps, not so; but the name may have been originally written with a double
03 λ and not with an σ, meaning that the God knew many things

[1] Il. xiv. 201, 302:—the line is not found in the extant works of Hesiod.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Pluto.

(πολλὰ εἰδώς). And perhaps also he being the shaker of the earth, has been named from shaking (σείειν), and then π and δ have been added. Pluto gives wealth (πλοῦτος), and his name means the giver of wealth, which comes out of the earth beneath. People in general appear to imagine that the term Hades is connected with the invisible (ἀειδὲς); and so they are led by their fears to call the God Pluto instead.

Her. And what is the true derivation?

Soc. In spite of the mistakes which are made about the power of this deity, and the foolish fears which people have of him, such as the fear of always being with him after death, and of the soul denuded of the body going to him[1], my belief is that all is quite consistent, and that the office and name of the God really correspond.

Her. Why, how is that?

Soc. I will tell you my own opinion; but first, I should like to ask you which chain does any animal feel to be the stronger? and which confines him more to the same spot,—desire or necessity?

Her. Desire, Socrates, is stronger far.

Soc. And do you not think that many a one would escape from Hades, if he did not bind those who depart to him by the strongest of chains?

Her. Assuredly they would.

Soc. And if by the greatest of chains, then by some desire, as I should certainly infer, and not by necessity?

Her. Clearly.

Soc. And there are many desires?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And therefore by the greatest desire, if the chain is to be the greatest?

Her. Yes.

Soc. And is any desire stronger than the thought that you will be made better by associating with another?

Her. Certainly not.

Extravagant explanations of the name Pluto, which are

Soc. And is not that the reason, Hermogenes, why no one, who has been to him, is willing to come back to us? Even the Sirens, like all the rest of the world, have been laid under his spells. Such a charm, as I imagine, is the God able to

[1] Cp. Rep. 3. 386, 387.

infuse into his words. And, according to this view, he is the perfect and accomplished Sophist, and the great benefactor of the inhabitants of the other world; and even to us who are upon earth he sends from below exceeding blessings. For he has much more than he wants down there; wherefore he is called Pluto (or the rich). But he will have nothing to do with men while they are in the body; only when the soul is liberated from the desires and evils of the body, has he communion with them. Is there not a great deal of philosophy and reflection in this? for in their liberated state he can bind them with the desire of virtue, but while they are flustered and maddened by the body, not even father Cronos himself would suffice to keep them with him in his own far-famed chains.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

meekly accepted by the simple-minded Hermogenes.

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Her. There is a deal of truth in what you say.

Soc. Yes, Hermogenes, and the legislator called him Hades, not from the unseen (*ἀειδὲς*) — far otherwise, but from his knowledge (*εἰδέναι*) of all noble things.

Ἀιδης.

Her. Very good; and what do we say of Demeter, and Herè, and Apollo, and Athene, and Hephaestus, and Ares, and the other deities?

Soc. Demeter is so called because she gives food like a mother (*ἡ διδοῦσα μήτηρ*); Herè is the lovely one (*ἐρατὴ*) — for Zeus, according to tradition, loved and married her; possibly also the name may have been given when the legislator was thinking of the heavens, and may be only a disguise of the air (*ἀὴρ*), putting the end in the place of the beginning. You will recognize the truth of this if you repeat the letters of Herè several times over. People dread the name of Pherephatta as they dread the name of Apollo,— and with as little reason; the fear, if I am not mistaken, only arises from their ignorance of the nature of names. But they go changing the name into Phersephone, and they are terrified at this; whereas the new name means only that the Goddess is wise (*σοφή*); for seeing that all things in the world are in motion (*φερομένων*), that principle which embraces and touches and is able to follow them, is wisdom. And therefore the Goddess may be truly called Pherepaphe (*Φερεπάφα*), or some name like it, because she touches that which is in motion (*τοῦ φερομένου ἐφαπτομένη*), herein showing her wisdom. And Hades, who is wise, consorts with her, because she is wise. They alter her name

Demeter.

Herè.

Persephone.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Apollo.

into Pherephatta now-a-days, because the present generation care for euphony more than truth. There is the other name, Apollo, which, as I was saying, is generally supposed to have some terrible signification. Have you remarked this fact?

Her. To be sure I have, and what you say is true.

Soc. But the name, in my opinion, is really most expressive of the power of the God.

Her. How so?

Soc. I will endeavour to explain, for I do not believe that any single name could have been better adapted to express 405
the attributes of the God, embracing and in a manner signifying all four of them,—music, and prophecy, and medicine, and archery.

Her. That must be a strange name, and I should like to hear the explanation.

The fourfold interpretation of the name.

Soc. Say rather an harmonious name, as beseems the God of Harmony. In the first place, the purgations and purifications which doctors and diviners use, and their fumigations with drugs magical or medicinal, as well as their washings and lustral sprinklings, have all one and the same object, which is to make a man pure both in body and soul.

Her. Very true.

Soc. And is not Apollo the purifier, and the washer, and the absolver from all impurities?

Her. Very true.

Soc. Then in reference to his ablutions and absolutions, as being the physician who orders them, he may be rightly called Ἀπολούων (purifier); or in respect of his powers of divination, and his truth and sincerity, which is the same as truth, he may be most fitly called Ἁπλῶς, from ἁπλοῦς (sincere), as in the Thessalian dialect, for all the Thessalians call him Ἁπλός; also he is ἀεὶ βάλλων (always shooting), because he is a master archer who never misses; or again, the name may refer to his musical attributes, and then, as in ἀκόλουθος, and ἄκοιτις, and in many other words the *a* is supposed to mean 'together,' so the meaning of the name Apollo will be 'moving together,' whether in the poles of heaven as they are called, or in the harmony of song, which is termed concord, because he moves all together by an harmonious power, as astronomers and musicians ingeniously declare.

He is called in the Thessalian dialect ἁπλός.

And he is the God who presides over harmony, and makes all things move together, both among Gods and among men. And as in the words *ἀκόλουθος* and *ἄκοιτις* the *α* is substituted for an *ο*, so the name *Ἀπόλλων* is equivalent to *ὁμοπολῶν*; only the second *λ* is added in order to avoid the ill-omened sound of destruction (*ἀπολῶν*). Now the suspicion of this destructive power still haunts the minds of some who do not
406 consider the true value of the name, which, as I was saying just now [1], has reference to all the powers of the God, who is the single one, the everdarting, the purifier, the mover together (*ἁπλοῦς, ἀεὶ βάλλων, ἀπολούων, ὁμοπολῶν*). The name of the Muses and of music would seem to be derived from their making philosophical enquiries (*μῶσθαι*); and Leto is called by this name, because she is such a gentle Goddess, and so willing (*ἐθελήμων*) to grant our requests; or her name may be Letho, as she is often called by strangers — they seem to imply by it her amiability, and her smooth and easy-going way of behaving. Artemis is named from her healthy (*ἀρτεμὴς*), well-ordered nature, and because of her love of virginity, perhaps because she is a proficient in virtue (*ἀρετὴ*), and perhaps also as hating intercourse of the sexes (*τὸν ἄροτον μισήσασα*). He who gave the Goddess her name may have had any or all of these reasons.

Cratylus. SOCRATES, HERMOGENES. The Muses. Leto. Artemis.

Her. What is the meaning of Dionysus and Aphrodite? Dionysus.

Soc. Son of Hipponicus, you ask a solemn question; there is a serious and also a facetious explanation of both these names; the serious explanation is not to be had from me, but there is no objection to your hearing the facetious one: for the Gods too love a joke. *Διόννσος* is simply *διδοὺς οἶνον* (giver of wine), *Διδοίννσος*, as he might be called in fun,— and *οἶνος* is properly *οἰόνους*, because wine makes those who drink, think (*οἴεσθαι*) that they have a mind (*νοῦν*) when they have none. The derivation of Aphrodite, born of the foam (*ἀφρὸς*), may be fairly accepted on the authority of Hesiod. Aphrodite.

Her. Still there remains Athene, whom you, Socrates, as an Athenian, will surely not forget; there are also Hephaestus and Ares. Athene.

Soc. I am not likely to forget them.

Her. No, indeed.

[1] Omitting *πολύ*.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Soc. There is no difficulty in explaining the other appellation of Athene.

Her. What other appellation?

Soc. We call her Pallas.

Pallas.

Her. To be sure.

Soc. And we cannot be wrong in supposing that this is derived from armed dances. For the elevation of oneself or anything else above the earth, or by the use of the hands, we 4c call shaking (*πάλλειν*), or dancing.

Her. That is quite true.

Soc. Then that is the explanation of the name Pallas?

Her. Yes; but what do you say of the other name?

Soc. Athene?

Her. Yes.

Athene again.

Soc. That is a graver matter, and there, my friend, the modern interpreters of Homer may, I think, assist in explaining the view of the ancients. For most of these in their explanations of the poet, assert that he meant by Athene 'mind' (*νοῦς*) and 'intelligence' (*διάνοια*), and the maker of names appears to have had a singular notion about her; and indeed calls her by a still higher title, 'divine intelligence' (*θεοῦ νόησις*), as though he would say: This is she who has the mind of God (*θεονόα*);—using *α* as a dialectical variety for *η*, and taking away *ι* and *σ*[1]. Perhaps, however, the name *θεονόη* may mean 'she who knows divine things' (*θεῖα νοοῦσα*) better than others. Nor shall we be far wrong in supposing that the author of it wished to identify this Goddess with moral intelligence (*ἐν ἤθει νόησιν*), and therefore gave her the name *ἠθονόη*; which, however, either he or his successors have altered into what they thought a nicer form, and called her Athene.

Hephaestus.

Her. But what do you say of Hephaestus?

Soc. Speak you of the princely lord of light (*φάεος ἴστορα*)?

Her. Surely.

Soc. Ἥφαιστος is *Φαΐστος*, and has added the *η* by attraction; that is obvious to anybody.

Her. That is very probable, until some more probable notion gets into your head.

[1] There seems to be some error in the MSS. The meaning is that the word *θεονόα* = *θεοννόα* is a curtailed form of *θεοῦ νόησις*, but the omitted letters do not agree.

Soc. To prevent which, you had better ask what is the derivation of Ares.

Her. What is Ares?

Soc. Ares may be called, if you will, from his manhood (ἄρρεν) and manliness, or if you please, from his hard and unchangeable nature, which is the meaning of ἄρρατος: the latter is a derivation in every way appropriate to the God of war.

Ares.

Her. Very true.

Soc. And now, by the Gods, let us have no more of the Gods, for I am afraid of them; ask about anything but them, and thou shalt see how the steeds of Euthyphro can prance.

Her. Only one more God! I should like to know about Hermes, of whom I am said not to be a true son. Let us make him out, and then I shall know whether there is any meaning in what Cratylus says.

Hermes.

Soc. I should imagine that the name Hermes has to do
408 with speech, and signifies that he is the interpreter (ἑρμηνεὺς), or messenger, or thief, or liar, or bargainer; all that sort of thing has a great deal to do with language; as I was telling you, the word εἴρειν is expressive of the use of speech, and there is an often-recurring Homeric word ἐμήσατο, which means 'he contrived'— out of these two words, εἴρειν and μήσασθαι, the legislator formed the name of the God who invented language and speech[1]; and we may imagine him dictating to us the use of this name: 'O my friends,' says he to us, 'seeing that he is the contriver of tales or speeches, you may rightly call him Εἰρέμης.' And this has been improved by us, as we think, into Hermes. Iris also appears to have been called from the verb 'to tell' (εἴρειν), because she was a messenger.

Her. Then I am very sure that Cratylus was quite right in saying that I was no true son of Hermes (Ἑρμογένης), for I am not a good hand at speeches.

Soc. There is also reason, my friend, in Pan being the double-formed son of Hermes.

Her. How do you make that out?

Soc. As you are aware, speech signifies all things (πᾶν), and is always making them go round in a circle, and has two forms, true and false?

Her. Certainly.

[1] Omitting τὸ δὲ λέγειν δή ἐστιν εἴρειν.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Soc. Is not the truth that is in him the smooth or sacred form which dwells above among the Gods, whereas falsehood dwells among men below, and is rough like the goat of tragedy; for tales and falsehoods have generally to do with the tragic or goatish life, and tragedy is the place of them?

Her. Very true.

Pan.

Soc. Then surely Pan, who is the declarer of all things, (πᾶν) and the perpetual mover (ἀεὶ πολῶν) of all things, is rightly called αἰπόλος (goat-herd), he being the two-formed son of Hermes, smooth in his upper part, and rough and goatlike in his lower regions. And, as the son of Hermes, he is speech or the brother of speech, and that brother should be like brother is no marvel. But, as I was saying, my dear Hermogenes, let us get away from the Gods.

The stars, elements, etc.

Her. From these sort of Gods, by all means, Socrates. But why should we not discuss another kind of Gods — the sun, moon, stars, earth, aether, air, fire, water, the seasons, and the year?

Soc. You impose a great many tasks upon me. Still, if you wish, I will not refuse.

Her. You will oblige me.

Soc. How would you have me begin? Shall I take first of all him whom you mentioned first — the sun?

Her. Very good.

ἥλιος.

Soc. The origin of the sun will probably be clearer in the Doric form, for the Dorians call him ἅλιος, and this name is given to him because when he rises he gathers (ἁλίζοι) men together or because he is always rolling in his course (ἀεὶ εἰλεῖν ἰὼν) about the earth; or from αἰολεῖν, of which the meaning is the same as ποικίλλειν (to variegate), because he variegates the productions of the earth. 40

σελήνη.

Her. But what is σελήνη (the moon)?

Soc. That name is rather unfortunate for Anaxagoras.

Her. How so?

Soc. The word seems to forestall his recent discovery, that the moon receives her light from the sun.

Her. Why do you say so?

Soc. The two words σέλας (brightness) and φῶς (light) have much the same meaning?

Her. Yes.

Soc. This light about the moon is always new (*νέον*) and always old (*ἔνον*), if the disciples of Anaxagoras say truly. For the sun in his revolution always adds new light, and there is the old light of the previous month. *Cratylus.* SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

Her. Very true.

Soc. The moon is not unfrequently called *σελαναία*.

Her. True.

Soc. And as she has a light which is always old and always new (*ἔνον νέον ἀεὶ*), she may very properly have the name *σελαενονεοάεια*; and this when hammered into shape becomes *σελαναία*.

Her. A real dithyrambic sort of name that, Socrates. But what do you say of the month and the stars?

Soc. Μεὶς (month) is called from *μειοῦσθαι* (to lessen), because suffering diminution; the name of *ἄστρα* (stars) seems to be derived from *ἀστραπὴ*, which is an improvement on *ἀναστρωπὴ*, signifying the upsetting of the eyes (*ἀναστρέφειν ὤπα*). *μείς.* *ἄστρον.*

Her. What do you say of *πῦρ* (fire) and *ὕδωρ* (water)? *πῦρ.* *ὕδωρ.*

Soc. I am at a loss how to explain *πῦρ*; either the muse of Euthyphro has deserted me, or there is some very great difficulty in the word. Please, however, to note the contrivance which I adopt whenever I am in a difficulty of this sort.

Her. What is it?

Soc. I will tell you; but I should like to know first whether you can tell me what is the meaning of the word *πῦρ*?

Her. Indeed I cannot.

Soc. Shall I tell you what I suspect to be the true explanation of this and several other words? — My belief is that they are of foreign origin. For the Hellenes, especially those who were under the dominion of the barbarians, often borrowed from them.

Her. What is the inference?

Soc. Why, you know that any one who seeks to demonstrate the fitness of these names according to the Hellenic language, and not according to the language from which the words are derived, is rather likely to be at fault.

Her. Yes, certainly.

Soc. Well then, consider whether this *πῦρ* is not foreign;

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for the word is not easily brought into relation with the Hellenic tongue, and the Phrygians may be observed to have the same word slightly changed, just as they have ὕδωρ (water) and κύνες (dogs), and many other words.

Her. That is true.

Soc. Any violent interpretations of the words should be avoided; for something to say about them may easily be found. And thus I get rid of πῦρ and ὕδωρ. Ἀήρ (air), Hermogenes, may be explained as the element which raises (αἴρει) things from the earth, or as ever flowing (ἀεὶ ῥεῖ), or because the flux of the air is wind, and the poets call the winds 'air-blasts,' (ἀῆται); he who uses the term may mean, so to speak, air-flux (ἀητόρρουν), in the sense of wind-flux (πνευματόρρουν); and because this moving wind may be expressed by either term he employs the word air (ἀήρ=ἀήτης ῥέω). Αἰθὴρ (aether) I should interpret as ἀειθεήρ; this may be correctly said, because this element is always running in a flux about the air (ἀεὶ θεῖ περὶ τὸν ἀέρα ῥέων). The meaning of the word γῆ (earth) comes out better when in the form of γαῖα, for the earth may be truly called 'mother' (γαῖα, γεννήτειρα), as in the language of Homer (Od. ix. 118; xiii. 160) γεγάασι means γεγεννῆσθαι.

ἀήρ.

αἰθήρ.

Her. Good.

Soc. What shall we take next?

Her. There are ὧραι (the seasons), and the two names of the year, ἐνιαυτὸς and ἔτος.

ὧραι.

Soc. The ὧραι should be spelt in the old Attic way, if you desire to know the probable truth about them; they are rightly called the ὧραι because they divide (ὁρίζουσιν) the summers and winters and winds and the fruits of the earth. The words ἐνιαυτὸς and ἔτος appear to be the same,—'that which brings to light the plants and growths of the earth in their turn, and passes them in review within itself (ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἐξετάζει):' this is broken up into two words, ἐνιαυτὸς from ἐν ἑαυτῷ, and ἔτος from ἐτάζει, just as the original name of Ζεὺς was divided into Ζῆνα and Δία; and the whole proposition means that this power of reviewing from within is one, but has two names, two words ἔτος and ἐνιαυτὸς being thus formed out of a single proposition.

ἐνιαυτός.

ἔτος.

Her. Indeed, Socrates, you make surprising progress.

Soc. I am run away with.

Her. Very true.

Soc. But am not yet at my utmost speed.

III *Her.* I should like very much to know, in the next place, how you would explain the virtues. What principle of correctness is there in those charming words — wisdom, understanding, justice, and the rest of them?

Soc. That is a tremendous class of names which you are disinterring; still, as I have put on the lion's skin, I must not be faint of heart; and I suppose that I must consider the meaning of wisdom (*φρόνησις*) and understanding (*σύνεσις*), and judgment (*γνώμη*), and knowledge (*ἐπιστήμη*), and all those other charming words, as you call them?

Her. Surely, we must not leave off until we find out their meaning.

Soc. By the dog of Egypt I have not a bad notion which came into my head only this moment: I believe that the primeval givers of names were undoubtedly like too many of our modern philosophers, who, in their search after the nature of things, are always getting dizzy from constantly going round and round, and then they imagine that the world is going round and round and moving in all directions; and this appearance, which arises out of their own internal condition, they suppose to be a reality of nature; they think that there is nothing stable or permanent, but only flux and motion, and that the world is always full of every sort of motion and change. The consideration of the whole class of names which I have mentioned has led me into making this reflection.

The heads of the givers of names were going round and round, and therefore they imagined that the world was going round and round.

Her. How so, Socrates?

Soc. Perhaps you did not observe that in the names which have been just cited, the motion or flux or generation of things is most surely indicated.

Her. No, indeed, I never thought of it.

Soc. Take the first of those which you mentioned; clearly that is a name indicative of motion.

Her. What was the name?

Soc. *Φρόνησις* (wisdom), which may signify *φορᾶς καὶ ῥοῦ νόησις* (perception of motion and flux), or perhaps *φορᾶς ὄνησις* (the blessing of motion), but is at any rate connected with *φέρεσθαι* (motion); *γνώμη* (judgment), again, certainly implies the pon-

φρόνησις.

γνώμη.

Cratylus. SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

deration or consideration (*νώμησις*) of generation, for to ponder is the same as to consider; or, if you would rather, here is *νόησις*, the very word just now mentioned, which is *νέου ἔσις* (the desire of the new); the word *νέος* implies that the world is always in process of creation. The giver of the name wanted to express this longing of the soul, for the original name was *νεόεσις*, and not *νόησις*; but *η* took the place of a double *ε*. The word *σωφροσύνη* is the salvation (*σωτηρία*) of that wisdom (*φρόνησις*) which we were just now considering. 41
Ἐπιστήμη (knowledge) is akin to this, and indicates that the soul which is good for anything follows (*ἕπεται*) the motion of things, neither anticipating them nor falling behind them; wherefore the word should rather be read as *ἐπιστημένη*[1], inserting *ἐν*. Σύνεσις (understanding) may be regarded in like manner as a kind of conclusion; the word is derived from *συνιέναι* (to go along with), and, like *ἐπίστασθαι* (to know), implies the progression of the soul in company with the nature of things. Σοφία (wisdom) is very dark, and appears not to be of native growth; the meaning is, touching the motion or stream of things. You must remember that the poets, when they speak of the commencement of any rapid motion, often use the word *ἐσύθη* (he rushed); and there was a famous Lacedaemonian who was named Σοῦς (Rush), for by this word the Lacedaemonians signify rapid motion, and the touching (*ἐπαφὴ*) of motion is expressed by *σοφία*, for all things are supposed to be in motion. Good (*ἀγαθὸν*) is the name which is given to the admirable (*ἀγαστῷ*) in nature; for, although all things move, still there are degrees of motion; some are swifter, some slower; but there are some things which are admirable for their swiftness, and this admirable part of nature is called *ἀγαθόν*. Δικαιοσύνη (justice) is clearly *δικαίου σύνεσις* (understanding of the just); but the actual word *δίκαιον* is more difficult: men are only agreed to a certain extent about justice, and then they begin to disagree. For those who suppose all things to be in motion conceive the greater part of nature to be a mere receptacle; and they say that there is a penetrating power which passes through all this, and is the instrument of creation in all, and is the subtlest and swiftest element; for if it were not the subtlest,

νόησις.

σωφροσύνη.

ἐπιστήμη.

σύνεσις.

σοφία.

ἀναθόν.

δικαιοσύνη.

Explanation of justice based on the doctrines of Heracleitus

[1] Reading *ἐμβάλλοντας δεῖ τὸ ἐν*: cp. *infra*, 437 A.

and a power which none can keep out, and also the swiftest, passing by other things as if they were standing still, it could not penetrate through the moving universe. And this element, which superintends all things and pierces (*διαϊὸν*) all, is rightly called *δίκαιον*; the letter *κ* is only added for the sake of euphony. Thus far, as I was saying, there is
413 a general agreement about the nature of justice; but I, Hermogenes, being an enthusiastic disciple, have been told in a mystery that the justice of which I am speaking is also the cause of the world: now a cause is that because of which anything is created; and some one comes and whispers in my ear that justice is rightly so called because partaking of the nature of the cause, and I begin, after hearing what he has said, to interrogate him gently: 'Well, my excellent friend,' say I, 'but if all this be true, I still want to know what is justice.' Thereupon they think that I ask tiresome questions, and am leaping over the barriers, and have been already sufficiently answered, and they try to satisfy me with one derivation after another, and at length they quarrel. For one of them says that justice is the sun, and that he and none other, with his penetrating (*διαϊόντα*) and burning (*καόντα*) force, is the guardian of nature. And when I joyfully repeat this beautiful notion, I am answered by the satirical remark, 'What, is there no justice in the world when the sun is down?' And when I earnestly beg my questioner to tell me his own honest opinion, he says, 'Fire in the abstract;' but this is not very intelligible. Another says, 'No, not fire in the abstract, but the abstraction of heat in the fire.' Another man professes to laugh at all this, and says, as Anaxagoras says, that justice is mind, for mind, as they say, has absolute power, and mixes with nothing, and orders all things, and passes through all things. At last, my friend, I find myself in far greater perplexity about the nature of justice than I was before I began to learn. But still I am of opinion that the name, which has led me into this digression, was given to justice for the reasons which I have mentioned.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

and of Anaxagoras.

Her. I think, Socrates, that you are not improvising now; you must have heard this from some one else.

The simple Hermogenes is convinced that Socrates

Soc. And not the rest?

Her. Hardly.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

is no longer pretending.

ἀνδρεία.

Soc. Well, then, let me go on in the hope of making you believe in the originality of the rest. What remains after justice? I do not think that we have as yet discussed courage (*ἀνδρεία*),— injustice (*ἀδικία*), which is obviously nothing more than a hindrance to the penetrating principle (*διαϊόντος*), need not be considered. Well, then, the name of *ἀνδρεία* seems to imply a battle; — this battle is in the world of existence, and according to the doctrine of flux is only the counterflux (*ἐναντία ῥοή*): if you extract the *δ* from *ἀνδρεία*, the name at once signifies the thing, and you may clearly understand that *ἀνδρεία* is not the stream opposed to every stream, but only to that which is contrary to justice, for otherwise 414
ἄρρην. courage would not have been praised. The words *ἄρρην*
ἀνήρ. (male) and *ἀνὴρ* (man) also contain a similar allusion to the
γυνή. same principle of the upward flux (*τῇ ἄνω ῥοῇ*). *Γυνὴ* (woman)
θῆλυ. I suspect to be the same word as *γονή* (birth): *θῆλυ* (female) appears to be partly derived from *θηλὴ* (the teat), because the teat is like rain, and makes things flourish (*τεθηλέναι*).

Her. That is surely probable.

Soc. Yes; and the very word *θάλλειν* (to flourish) seems to figure the growth of youth, which is swift and sudden ever. And this is expressed by the legislator in the name, which is a compound of *θεῖν* (running), and *ἅλλεσθαι* (leaping). Pray observe how I gallop away when I get on smooth ground. There are a good many names generally thought to be of importance, which have still to be explained.

Her. True.

τέχνη. *Soc.* There is the meaning of the word *τέχνη* (art), for example —

Her. Very true —

Soc. Which may be identified with *ἐχονόη*, and expresses the possession of mind: you have only to take away the *τ* and insert two *o*'s, one between the *χ* and *ν*, and another between the *ν* and *η*.

Her. That is a very shabby etymology.

Soc. Yes, my dear friend; but then you know that the original names have been long ago buried and disguised by people sticking on and stripping off letters for the sake of euphony, and twisting and bedizening them in all sorts of ways: and time too may have had a share in the change.

Take, for example, the word κάτοπτρον; why is the letter ρ inserted? This must surely be the addition of some one who cares nothing about the truth, but thinks only of putting the mouth into shape. And the additions are often such that at last no human being can possibly make out the original meaning of the word. Another example is the word σφὶγξ, σφιγγὸς, which ought properly to be φὶγξ, φιγγὸς, and there are other examples. *Cratylus.* SOCRATES, HERMOGENES. κάτοπτρον. σφίγξ, φίγξ.

Her. That is quite true, Socrates.

Soc. And yet, if you are permitted to put in and pull out any letters which you please, names will be too easily made, and any name may be adapted to any object.

Her. True.

Soc. Yes, that is true. And therefore a wise dictator, like yourself, should observe the laws of moderation and probability.

Her. Such is my desire.

Soc. And mine, too, Hermogenes. But do not be too much of a precisian, or 'you will unnerve me of my strength[1].' When you have allowed me to add μηχανὴ (contrivance) to τέχνη (art) I shall be at the top of my bent, for I conceive μηχανὴ to be a sign of great accomplishment — ἄνειν, for μῆκος has the meaning of greatness, and these two, μῆκος and ἄνειν, make up the word μηχανή. But, as I was saying, being now at the top of my bent, I should like to consider the meaning of the two words ἀρετὴ (virtue) and κακία (vice); ἀρετὴ I do not as yet understand, but κακία is transparent, and agrees with the principles which preceded, for all things being in a flux (ἰόντων), κακία is κακῶς ἰὸν (going badly); and this evil motion when existing in the soul has the general name of κακία, or vice, specially appropriated to it. The meaning of κακῶς ἰέναι may be further illustrated by the use of δειλία (cowardice), which ought to have come after ἀνδρεία, but was forgotten, and, as I fear, is not the only word which has been passed over. Δειλία signifies that the soul is bound with a strong chain (δεσμὸς), for λίαν means strength, and therefore δειλία expresses the greatest and strongest bond of the soul; and ἀπορία (difficulty) is an evil of the same nature (from α not, and πορεύεσθαι to go), like anything else which is

415 μηχανή. ἀρετὴ, κακία. δειλία.

[1] Iliad vi. 265.

Cratylus.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES.

an impediment to motion and movement. Then the word *κακία* appears to mean *κακῶς ἰέναι*, or going badly, or limping and halting; of which the consequence is, that the soul becomes filled with vice. And if *κακία* is the name of this sort of thing, *ἀρετὴ* will be the opposite of it, signifying in the first place ease of motion, then that the stream of the good soul is unimpeded, and has therefore the attribute of ever flowing without let or hindrance, and is therefore called *ἀρετὴ*, or, more correctly, *ἀειρειτὴ* (ever-flowing), and may perhaps have had another form, *αἱρετὴ* (eligible), indicating that nothing is more eligible than virtue, and this has been hammered into *ἀρετή*. I daresay that you will deem this to be another invention of mine, but I think that if the previous word *κακία* was right, then *ἀρετὴ* is also right.

κακία and *ἀρετὴ* again.

Her. But what is the meaning of *κακὸν*, which has played so great a part in your previous discourse? 41

κακὸν, (of foreign origin).

Soc. That is a very singular word about which I can hardly form an opinion, and therefore I must have recourse to my ingenious device.

Her. What device?

Soc. The device of a foreign origin, which I shall give to this word also.

Her. Very likely you are right; but suppose that we leave these words, and endeavour to see the rationale of *καλὸν* and *αἰσχρόν*.

Soc. The meaning of *αἰσχρὸν* is evident, being only *ἀεὶ ἴσχον ῥοῆς* (always preventing from flowing), and this is in accordance with our former derivations. For the name-giver was a great enemy to stagnation of all sorts, and hence he gave the name *ἀεισχοροῦν* to that which hindered the flux (*ἀεὶ ἴσχον ῥοῦν*), and this is now beaten together into *αἰσχρόν*.

αἰσχρόν.

Her. But what do you say of *καλόν*?

καλόν.

Soc. That is more obscure; yet the form is only due to the quantity, and has been changed by altering *ου* into *ο*.

Her. What do you mean?

Soc. This name appears to denote mind.

Her. How so?

Soc. Let me ask you what is the cause why anything has a name; is not the principle which imposes the name the cause?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. And must not this be the mind of Gods, or of men, or of both?

Her. Yes.

Soc. Is not mind that which called (*καλέσαν*) things by their names, and is not mind the beautiful (*καλόν*)?

Her. That is evident.

Soc. And are not the works of intelligence and mind worthy of praise, and are not other works worthy of blame?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. Physic does the work of a physician, and carpentering does the works of a carpenter?

Her. Exactly.

Soc. And the principle of beauty does the works of beauty?

Her. Of course.

Soc. And that principle we affirm to be mind?

Her. Very true.

Soc. Then mind is rightly called beauty because she does the works which we recognize and speak of as the beautiful?

Her. That is evident.

Soc. What more names remain to us?

Her. There are the words which are connected with *ἀγαθὸν* and *καλὸν*, such as *συμφέρον* and *λυσιτελοῦν*, *ὠφελιμον*, *κερδα-* *συμφέρον.*
417 *λέον*, and their opposites.

Soc. The meaning of *συμφέρον* (expedient) I think that you may discover for yourself by the light of the previous examples,—for it is a sister word to *ἐπιστήμη*, meaning just the motion (*φορὰ*) of the soul accompanying the world, and things which are done upon this principle are called *σύμφορα* or *συμφέροντα*, because they are carried round with the world.

Her. That is probable.

Soc. Again, *κερδαλέον* (gainful) is called from *κέρδος* (gain), *κερδαλέον.*
but you must alter the *δ* into *ν* if you want to get at the meaning; for this word also signifies good, but in another way; he who gave the name intended to express the power of admixture (*κεραννύμενον*) and universal penetration in the good; in forming the word, however, he inserted a *δ* instead of an *ν*, and so made *κέρδος*.

Her. Well, but what is *λυσιτελοῦν* (profitable)?

Cratylus.

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λυσιτελοῦν.

Soc. I suppose, Hermogenes, that people do not mean by the profitable the gainful or that which pays (*λύει*) the retailer, but they use the word in the sense of swift. You regard the profitable (*λυσιτελοῦν*), as that which being the swiftest thing in existence, allows of no stay in things and no pause or end of motion, but always, if there begins to be any end, lets things go again (*λύει*), and makes motion immortal and unceasing: and in this point of view, as appears to me, the good is happily denominated *λυσιτελοῦν* — being that which looses (*λύον*) the end (*τέλος*) of motion. *Ὠφέλιμον* (the advantageous) is derived from *ὀφέλλειν*, meaning that which creates and increases; this latter is a common Homeric word, and has a foreign character.

ὠφέλιμον.

Her. And what do you say of their opposites?

Soc. Of such as are mere negatives I hardly think that I need speak.

Her. Which are they?

Soc. The words *ἀξύμφορον* (inexpedient), *ἀνωφελὲς* (unprofitable), *ἀλυσιτελὲς* (unadvantageous), *ἀκερδὲς* (ungainful).

Her. True.

Soc. I would rather take the words *βλαβερὸν* (harmful), *ζημιῶδες* (hurtful).

Her. Good.

βλαβερόν.

Soc. The word *βλαβερὸν* is that which is said to hinder or harm (*βλάπτειν*) the stream (*ῥοῦν*); *βλάπτον* is *βουλόμενον ἅπτειν* (seeking to hold or bind); for *ἅπτειν* is the same as *δεῖν*, and *δεῖν* is always a term of censure; *βουλόμενον ἅπτειν ῥοῦν* (wanting to bind the stream) would properly be *βουλαπτεροῦν*, and this, as I imagine, is improved into *βλαβερόν*.

Her. You bring out curious results, Socrates, in the use of names; and when I hear the word *βουλαπτεροῦν* I cannot help imagining that you are making your mouth into a flute, and puffing away at some prelude to Athene.

Soc. That is the fault of the makers of the name, Hermogenes; not mine. 41

Her. Very true; but what is the derivation of *ζημιῶδες*?

ζημιῶδες.

Soc. What is the meaning of *ζημιῶδες*? — let me remark, Hermogenes, how right I was in saying that great changes are made in the meaning of words by putting in and pulling out letters; even a very slight permutation will sometimes

give an entirely opposite sense; I may instance the word δέον, which occurs to me at the moment, and reminds me of what I was going to say to you, that the fine fashionable language of modern times has twisted and disguised and entirely altered the original meaning both of δέον, and also of ζημιῶδες, which in the old language is clearly indicated.

δέον.

Her. What do you mean?

Soc. I will try to explain. You are aware that our forefathers loved the sounds ι and δ, especially the women, who are most conservative of the ancient language, but now they change ι into η or ε, and δ into ζ; this is supposed to increase the grandeur of the sound.

We must allow for change of ι into η or ε, and of δ into ζ.

Her. How do you mean?

Soc. For example, in very ancient times they called the day either ἰμέρα or ἐμέρα, which is called by us ἡμέρα.

Her. That is true.

Soc. Do you observe that only the ancient form shows the intention of the giver of the name? of which the reason is, that men long for (ἱμείρουσι) and love the light which comes after the darkness, and is therefore called ἰμέρα, from ἵμερος desire.

Her. Clearly.

Soc. But now the name is so travestied that you cannot tell the meaning, although there are some who imagine the day to be called ἡμέρα because it makes things gentle (ἥμερα).

Her. Such is my view.

Soc. And do you know that the ancients said δνογὸν and not ζνγόν?

Her. They did so.

Soc. And ζνγὸν (yoke) has no meaning,—it ought to be δνογὸν, which word expresses the binding of two together (δνεῖν ἀγωγὴ) for the purpose of drawing;—this has been changed into ζνγὸν, and there are many other examples of similar changes.

Her. There are.

Soc. Proceeding in the same train of thought I may remark that the word δέον (obligation) has a meaning which is the opposite of all the other appellations of good; for δέον is here a species of good, and is, nevertheless, the chain

And so δέον=διόν.

Cratylus. (δεσμὸς) or hinderer of motion, and therefore own brother of *βλαβερόν*.

SOCRATES, HERMOGENES. *Her.* Yes, Socrates; that is quite plain.

Soc. Not if you restore the ancient form, which is more likely to be the correct one, and read *διὸν* instead of *δέον*; if you convert the *ε* into an *ι* after the old fashion, this word will then agree with other words meaning good; for *διὸν*, not *δέον*, signifies the good, and is a term of praise; and the author of names has not contradicted himself, but in all these various appellations, *δέον* (obligatory), *ὠφέλιμον* (advantageous), *λυσιτελοῦν* (profitable), *κερδαλέον* (gainful), *ἀγαθὸν* (good), *συμφέρον* (expedient), *εὔπορον* (plenteous), the same conception is implied of the ordering or all-pervading principle which is praised, and the restraining and binding principle which is censured. And this is further illustrated by the word *ζημιώδης* (hurtful), which if the *ζ* is only changed into *δ* as in the ancient language, becomes *δημιώδης*; and this name, as you will perceive, is given to that which binds motion (*δοῦντι ἰόν*).

ζημιώδης.

Her. What do you say of *ἡδονὴ* (pleasure), *λύπη* (pain), *ἐπιθυμία* (desire), and the like, Socrates?

Soc. I do not think, Hermogenes, that there is any great difficulty about them — *ἡδονὴ* is *ἡ ὄνησις*, the action which tends to advantage; and the original form may be supposed to have been *ἡονὴ*, but this has been altered by the insertion of the *δ*. *Λύπη* appears to be derived from the relaxation (*λύειν*) which the body feels when in sorrow; *ἀνία* (trouble) is the hindrance of motion (*α* and *ἰέναι*); *ἀλγηδὼν* (distress), if I am not mistaken, is a foreign word, which is derived from *ἀλγεινὸς* (grievous); *ὀδύνη* (grief) is called from the putting on (*ἔνδυσις*) sorrow; in *ἀχθηδὼν* (vexation) 'the word too labours,' as any one may see; *χαρὰ* (joy) is the very expression of the fluency and diffusion of the soul (*χέω*); *τέρψις* (delight) is so called from the pleasure creeping (*ἕρπον*) through the soul, which may be likened to a breath (*πνοή*) and is properly *ἑρπνοῦν*, but has been altered by time into *τερπνόν*; *εὐφροσύνη* (cheerfulness) and *ἐπιθυμία* explain themselves; the former, which ought to be *εὐφεροσύνη* and has been changed into *εὐφροσύνη*, is named, as every one may see, from the soul moving (*φέρεσθαι*) in harmony with nature; *ἐπιθυμία* is really *ἡ ἐπὶ τὸν θυμὸν ἴουσα δύναμις*, the power which enters into the

ἡδονή.

λύπη.

ἀνία.

ἀλγηδών

ὀδύνη.

ἀχθηδών.

χαρά.

τέρψις.

εὐφροσύνη.

ἐπιθυμία.

soul; *θυμὸς* (passion) is called from the rushing (*θύσεως*) and boiling of the soul; *ἵμερος* (desire) denotes the stream (*ῥοῦς*) which most draws the soul *διὰ τὴν ἕσιν τῆς ῥοῆς* — because flowing with desire (*ἰέμενος*), and expresses a longing after things and violent attraction of the soul to them, and is termed *ἵμερος* from possessing this power; *πόθος* (longing) is expressive of the desire of that which is not present but absent, and in another place (*ποθ*); this is the reason why the name *πόθος* is applied to things absent, as *ἵμερος* is to things present; *ἔρως* (love) is so called because flowing in (*ἐσρῶν*) from without; the stream is not inherent, but is an influence introduced through the eyes, and from flowing in was called *ἔσρος* (influx) in the old time when they used *ο* for *ω*, and is called *ἔρως*, now that *ω* is substituted for *ο*. But why do you not give me another word?

Cratylus. SOCRATES, HERMOGENES. *θυμός.* *ἵμερος.* *πόθος.* *ἔρως.*

Her. What do you think of *δόξα* (opinion), and that class of words?

δόξα.

Soc. Δόξα is either derived from *δίωξις* (pursuit), and expresses the march of the soul in the pursuit of knowledge, or from the shooting of a bow (*τόξον*); the latter is more likely, and is confirmed by *οἴησις* (thinking), which is only *οἶσις* (moving), and implies the movement of the soul to the essential nature of each thing — just as *βουλὴ* (counsel) has to do with shooting (*βολή*); and *βούλεσθαι* (to wish) combines the notion of aiming and deliberating — all these words seem to follow *δόξα*, and all involve the idea of shooting, just as *ἀβουλία*, absence of counsel, on the other hand, is a mishap, or missing, or mistaking of the mark, or aim, or proposal, or object.

βουλή.

Her. You are quickening your pace now, Socrates.

Soc. Why yes, the end I now dedicate to[1] God, not, however, until I have explained *ἀνάγκη* (necessity), which ought to come next, and *ἑκούσιον* (the voluntary). Ἑκούσιον is certainly the yielding (*εἶκον*) and unresisting — the notion implied is yielding and not opposing, yielding, as I was just now saying, to that motion which is in accordance with our will; but the necessary and resistant being contrary to our will, implies error and ignorance; the idea is taken from walking through a ravine which is impassable, and rugged, and over-

ἑκούσιον.

[1] Reading *θεῷ*.

Cratylus.

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grown, and impedes motion — and this is the derivation of the word *ἀναγκαῖον* (necessary) *ἀν' ἄγκη ἰὸν*, going through a ravine. But while my strength lasts let us persevere, and I hope that you will persevere with your questions.

ἀναγκαῖον.

Her. Well, then, let me ask about the greatest and noblest, such as *ἀλήθεια* (truth) and *ψεῦδος* (falsehood) and *ὄν* (being), not forgetting to enquire why the word *ὄνομα* (name), which is the theme of our discussion, has this name of *ὄνομα.*

Soc. You know the word *μαίεσθαι* (to seek)?

Her. Yes;— meaning the same as *ζητεῖν* (to enquire).

ὄνομα.

Soc. The word *ὄνομα* seems to be a compressed sentence, signifying *ὂν οὗ ζήτημα* (being for which there is a search); as is still more obvious in *ὀνομαστὸν* (notable), which states in so many words that real existence is that for which there is a seeking (*ὂν οὗ μάσμα*); *ἀλήθεια* is also an agglomeration of *θεία ἄλη* (divine wandering), implying the divine motion of existence; *ψεῦδος* (falsehood) is the opposite of motion; here is another ill name given by the legislator to stagnation and forced inaction, which he compares to sleep (*εὕδειν*); but the original meaning of the word is disguised by the addition of *ψ*; *ὄν* and *οὐσία* are *ἰὸν* with an *ι* broken off; this agrees with the true principle, for being (*ὄν*) is also moving (*ἰὸν*), and the same may be said of not being, which is likewise called not going (*οὐκίον* or *οὐκὶ ὄν=οὐκ ἰόν*).

ἀλήθεια.

ψεῦδος.

What of *ἰὸν, ῥέον, δοῦν*?

Her. You have hammered away at them manfully; but suppose that some one were to say to you, what is the word *ἰὸν*, and what are *ῥέον* and *δοῦν*? — show me their fitness.

Soc. You mean to say, how should I answer him?

Her. Yes.

Soc. One way of giving the appearance of an answer has been already suggested.

Her. What way?

Names which we do not understand are probably of foreign origin.

Soc. To say that names which we do not understand are of foreign origin; and this is very likely the right answer, and something of this kind may be true of them; but also the original forms of words may have been lost in the lapse of ages; names have been so twisted in all manner of ways, that I should not be surprised if the old language when compared with that now in use would appear to us to be a barbarous tongue.

Her. Very likely.

Soc. Yes, very likely. But still the enquiry demands our earnest attention and we must not flinch. For we should remember, that if a person go on analysing names into words, and enquiring also into the elements out of which the words are formed, and keeps on always repeating this process, he who has to answer him must at last give up the enquiry in despair.

But we should consider also that there is a point at which the analysis of words must stop.

Her. Very true.

Soc. And at what point ought he to lose heart and give up the enquiry? Must he not stop when he comes to the names which are the elements of all other names and sentences; for these cannot be supposed to be made up of other names? The word *ἀγαθὸν* (good), for example, is, as we were saying, a compound of *ἀγαστὸς* (admirable) and *θοός* (swift). And probably *θοὸς* is made up of other elements, and these again of others. But if we take a word which is incapable of further resolution, then we shall be right in saying that we have at last reached a primary element, which need not be resolved any further.

Her. I believe you to be in the right.

Soc. And suppose the names about which you are now asking should turn out to be primary elements, must not their truth or law be examined according to some new method?

Her. Very likely.

Soc. Quite so, Hermogenes; all that has preceded would lead to this conclusion. And if, as I think, the conclusion is true, then I shall again say to you, come and help me, that I may not fall into some absurdity in stating the principle of primary names.

Then some new method is required in the explanation of primary names.

Her. Let me hear, and I will do my best to assist you.

Soc. I think that you will acknowledge with me, that one principle is applicable to all names, primary as well as secondary — when they are regarded simply as names, there is no difference in them.

Her. Certainly not.

Soc. All the names that we have been explaining were intended to indicate the nature of things.

Her. Of course.

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Soc. And that this is true of the primary quite as much as of the secondary names, is implied in their being names.

Her. Surely.

Soc. But the secondary, as I conceive, derive their significance from the primary.

Her. That is evident.

Soc. Very good; but then how do the primary names which precede analysis show the natures of things, as far as they can be shown; which they must do, if they are to be real names? And here I will ask you a question: Suppose that we had no voice or tongue, and wanted to communicate with one another, should we not, like the deaf and dumb, make signs with the hands and head and the rest of the body?

Her. There would be no choice, Socrates.

Soc. We should imitate the nature of the thing; the elevation of our hands to heaven would mean lightness and upwardness; heaviness and downwardness would be expressed by letting them drop to the ground; if we were describing the running of a horse, or any other animal, we should make our bodies and our gestures as like as we could to them.

Her. I do not see that we could do anything else.

Soc. We could not; for by bodily imitation only can the body ever express anything.

Her. Very true.

They are the imitation of that which we want to express.

Soc. And when we want to express ourselves, either with the voice, or tongue, or mouth, the expression is simply their imitation of that which we want to express.

Her. It must be so, I think.

Soc. Then a name is a vocal imitation of that which the vocal imitator names or imitates?

Her. I think so.

Soc. Nay, my friend, I am disposed to think that we have not reached the truth as yet.

Her. Why not?

Soc. Because if we have we shall be obliged to admit that the people who imitate sheep, or cocks, or other animals, name that which they imitate.

Her. Quite true.

Soc. Then could I have been right in what I was saying?

Her. In my opinion, no. But I wish that you would tell me, Socrates, what sort of an imitation is a name?

But what sort of an imitation? Not like that of a musician or of a painter.

Soc. In the first place, I should reply, not a musical imitation, although that is also vocal; nor, again, an imitation of what music imitates; these, in my judgment, would not be naming. Let me put the matter as follows: All objects have sound and figure, and many have colour?

Her. Certainly.

Soc. But the art of naming appears not to be concerned with imitations of this kind; the arts which have to do with them are music and drawing?

Her. True.

Soc. Again, is there not an essence of each thing, just as there is a colour, or sound? And is there not an essence of colour and sound as well as of anything else which may be said to have an essence?

Her. I should think so.

Soc. Well, and if any one could express the essence of each thing in letters and syllables, would he not express the nature of each thing?

424 *Her.* Quite so.

Soc. The musician and the painter were the two names which you gave to the two other imitators. What will this imitator be called?

Her. I imagine, Socrates, that he must be the namer, or name-giver, of whom we are in search.

Soc. If this is true, then I think that we are in a condition to consider the names *ῥοὴ* (stream), *ἰέναι* (to go), *σχέσις* (retention), about which you were asking; and we may see whether the namer has grasped the nature of them in letters and syllables in such a manner as to imitate the essence or not.

Her. Very good.

Soc. But are these the only primary names, or are there others?

Her. There must be others.

Soc. So I should expect. But how shall we further analyse them, and where does the imitator begin? Imitation of the

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essence is made by syllables and letters; ought we not, therefore, first to separate the letters, just as those who are beginning rhythm first distinguish the powers of elementary, and then of compound sounds, and when they have done so, but not before, they proceed to the consideration of rhythms?

Her. Yes.

The first step to separate letters into classes,

Soc. Must we not begin in the same way with letters; first separating the vowels, and then the consonants and mutes[1], into classes, according to the received distinctions of the learned; also the semi-vowels, which are neither vowels, nor yet mutes; and distinguishing into classes the vowels themselves? And when we have perfected the classification of things, we shall give them names, and see whether, as in the case of letters, there are any classes to which they may be all referred[2]; and hence we shall see their natures, and see, too, whether they have in them classes as there are in the letters; and when we have well considered all this, we shall know how to apply them to what they resemble — whether one letter is used to denote one thing, or whether there is to be an admixture of several of them; just, as in painting, the painter who wants to depict anything sometimes uses purple only, or any other colour, and sometimes mixes up several colours, as his method is when he has to paint flesh colour or anything of that kind — he uses his colours as his figures appear to require them; and so, too, we shall apply letters to the expression of objects, either single letters when required, or several letters; and so we shall form syllables, as they are called, and from syllables make nouns and verbs; and thus, at last, from the com- 42
binations of nouns and verbs arrive at language, large and fair and whole; and as the painter made a figure, even so shall we make speech by the art of the namer or the rhetorician, or by some other art. Not that I am literally speaking of ourselves, but I was carried away — meaning to say that this was the way in which (not we but) the ancients formed language, and what they put together we must take to pieces in like manner, if we are to attain a scientific view of the whole subject; and we must see whether the primary,

and to see whether a simple letter is used to denote simple things, or whether several are mixed, like the colours of the painter, until the manner in which the ancients formed language is discovered by us.

[1] Letters which are neither vowels nor semivowels.

[2] Cf. Phaedrus, 271.

and also whether the secondary elements are rightly given or not, for if they are not, the composition of them, my dear Hermogenes, will be a sorry piece of work, and in the wrong direction.

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Her. That, Socrates, I can quite believe.

But can we take language to pieces in this way?

Soc. Well, but do you suppose that you will be able to analyse them in this way? for I am certain that I should not.

Her. Much less am I likely to be able.

Soc. Shall we leave them, then? or shall we seek to discover, if we can, something about them, according to the measure of our ability, saying by way of preface, as I said before of the Gods, that of the truth about them we know nothing, and do but entertain human notions of them. And in this present enquiry, let us say to ourselves, before we proceed, that the higher method is the one which we or others who would analyse language to any good purpose must follow; but under the circumstances, as men say, we must do as well as we can. What do you think?

Our method imperfect, but we have no other.

Her. I very much approve.

Soc. That objects should be imitated in letters and syllables, and so find expression, may appear ridiculous, Hermogenes, but it cannot be avoided — there is no better principle to which we can look for the truth of first names. Deprived of this, we must have recourse to divine help, like the tragic poets, who in any perplexity have their gods waiting in the air; and must get out of our difficulty in like fashion, by saying that 'the Gods gave the first names, and therefore they are right.' This will be the best contrivance, or perhaps that other notion may be even better still, of deriving them from some barbarous people, for the barbarians are older than we
426 are; or we may say that antiquity has cast a veil over them, which is the same sort of excuse as the last; for all these are not reasons but only ingenious excuses for having no reasons concerning the truth of words. And yet any sort of ignorance of first or primitive names involves an ignorance of secondary words; for they can only be explained by the primary. Clearly then the professor of languages should be able to give a very lucid explanation of first names, or let him be assured he will only talk nonsense about the rest. Do you not suppose this to be true?

If we reject imitation we must have recourse to the 'Deus ex machina' or 'the barbarian' or 'the veil of antiquity.'

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Her. Certainly, Socrates.

Soc. My first notions of original names are truly wild and ridiculous, though I have no objection to impart them to you if you desire, and I hope that you will communicate to me in return anything better which you may have.

Her. Fear not; I will do my best.

ρ expresses motion.

κίνησις = ἴεσις.

Soc. In the first place, the letter ρ appears to me to be the general instrument expressing all motion (*κίνησις*). But I have not yet explained the meaning of this latter word, which is just *ἴεσις* (going); for the letter η was not in use among the ancients, who only employed ε; and the root is *κίειν*, which is a foreign form, the same as *ἰέναι*. And the old word *κίνησις* will be correctly given as *ἴεσις* in corresponding modern letters. Assuming this foreign root *κίειν*, and allowing for the change of the η and the insertion of the ν, we have *κινησις*, which should have been *κιείνησις* or *εἴσις*; and *στᾶσις* is the negative of *ἰέναι* (or *εἴσις*), and has been improved into *στάσις*. Now the letter ρ, as I was saying, appeared to the imposer of names an excellent instrument for the expression of motion; and he frequently uses the letter for this purpose: for example, in the actual words *ῥεῖν* and *ῥοὴ* he represents motion by ρ; also in the words *τρόμος* (trembling), *τραχὺς* (rugged); and again, in words such as *κρούειν* (strike), *θραύειν* (crush), *ἐρείκειν* (bruise), *θρύπτειν* (break), *κερματίζειν* (crumble), *ῥυμβεῖν* (whirl): of all these sorts of movements he generally finds an expression in the letter R, because, as I imagine, he had observed that the tongue was most agitated and least at rest in the pronunciation of this letter, which he therefore used in order to express motion,

ι expressive of penetration:

just as by the letter ι he expresses the subtle elements which 42
pass through all things. This is why he uses the letter ι as imitative of motion, *ἰέναι*, *ἴεσθαι*. And there is another class

φ, ψ, σ, ζ, of shaking and shivering:

of letters, φ, ψ, σ and ζ, of which the pronunciation is accompanied by great expenditure of breath; these are used in the imitation of such notions as *ψυχρὸν* (shivering), *ζέον* (seething), *σείεσθαι* (to be shaken), *σεισμὸς* (shock), and are always introduced by the giver of names when he wants to imitate what is *φυσῶδες* (windy). He seems to have thought that the

δ, τ, of binding and rest at a place:

closing and pressure of the tongue in the utterance of δ and τ was expressive of binding and rest in a place: he further

observed the liquid movement of λ, in the pronunciation of which the tongue slips, and in this he found the expression of smoothness, as in λεῖος (level), and in the word ὀλισθάνειν (to slip) itself, λιπαρὸν (sleek), in the word κολλῶδες (gluey), and the like: the heavier sound of γ detained the slipping tongue, and the union of the two gave the notion of a glutinous clammy nature, as in γλίσχρος, γλυκὺς, γλοιῶδες. The ν he observed to be sounded from within, and therefore to have a notion of inwardness; hence he introduced the sound in ἔνδον and ἐντός: α he assigned to the expression of size, and η of length, because they are great letters: ο was the sign of roundness, and therefore there is plenty of ο mixed up in the word γογγύλον (round). Thus did the legislator, reducing all things into letters and syllables, and impressing on them names and signs, and out of them by imitation compounding other signs. That is my view, Hermogenes, of the truth of names; but I should like to hear what Cratylus has more to say.

Cratylus. SOCRATES, HERMOGENES, CRATYLUS. λ expressive of liquidity: γ of detention: ν of inwardness: α of size: η of length: ο of roundness.

Her. But, Socrates, as I was telling you before, Cratylus mystifies me; he says that there is a fitness of names, but he never explains what is this fitness, so that I cannot tell whether his obscurity is intended or not. Tell me now, Cratylus, here in the presence of Socrates, do you agree in what Socrates has been saying about names, or have you something better of your own? and if you have, tell me what your view is, and then you will either learn of Socrates, or Socrates and I will learn of you.

Hermogenes asks Cratylus to give an opinion; but the latter declines to explain so important a subject all in a moment.

Crat. Well, but surely, Hermogenes, you do not suppose that you can learn, or I explain, any subject of importance all in a moment; at any rate, not such a subject as language, which is, perhaps, the very greatest of all.

428 *Her.* No, indeed; but, as Hesiod says, and I agree with him, 'to add little to little' is worth while. And, therefore, if you think that you can add anything at all, however small, to our knowledge, take a little trouble and oblige Socrates, and me too, who certainly have a claim upon you.

Soc. I am by no means positive, Cratylus, in the view which Hermogenes and myself have worked out; and therefore do not hesitate to say what you think, which if it be better than my own view I shall gladly accept. And I should not be at all surprized to find that you have found

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some better notion. For you have evidently reflected on these matters and have had teachers, and if you have really a better theory of the truth of names, you may count me in the number of your disciples.

Crat. You are right, Socrates, in saying that I have made a study of these matters, and I might possibly convert you into a disciple. But I fear that the opposite is more probable, and I already find myself moved to say to you what Achilles in the 'Prayers' says to Ajax,—

> 'Illustrious Ajax, son of Telamon, lord of the people,
> You appear to have spoken in all things much to my mind.'

And you, Socrates, appear to me to be an oracle, and to give answers much to my mind, whether you are inspired by Euthyphro, or whether some Muse may have long been an inhabitant of your breast, unconsciously to yourself.

Socrates seeks to gain the assent of Cratylus to the previous argument.

Soc. Excellent Cratylus, I have long been wondering at my own wisdom; I cannot trust myself. And I think that I ought to stop and ask myself What am I saying? for there is nothing worse than self-deception — when the deceiver is always at home and always with you — it is quite terrible, and therefore I ought often to retrace my steps and endeavour to 'look fore and aft,' in the words of the aforesaid Homer. And now let me see; where are we? Have we not been saying that the correct name indicates the nature of the thing: — has this proposition been sufficiently proven?

Crat. Yes, Socrates, what you say, as I am disposed to think, is quite true.

Soc. Names, then, are given in order to instruct?

Crat. Certainly.

Soc. And naming is an art, and has artificers?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. And who are they?

Crat. The legislators, of whom you spoke at first. 429

Soc. And does this art grow up among men like other arts? Let me explain what I mean: of painters, some are better and some worse?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. The better painters execute their works, I mean their figures, better, and the worse execute them worse; and of

builders also, the better sort build fairer houses, and the worse build them worse.

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Crat. True.

Soc. And among legislators, there are some who do their work better and some worse?

Crat. No; there I do not agree with you.

But Cratylus cannot be induced by the argument from analogy to admit that names, when not rightly imposed, are names at all.

Soc. Then you do not think that some laws are better and others worse?

Crat. No, indeed.

Soc. Or that one name is better than another?

Crat. Certainly not.

Soc. Then all names are rightly imposed?

Crat. Yes, if they are names at all.

Soc. Well, what do you say to the name of our friend Hermogenes, which was mentioned before:—assuming that he has nothing of the nature of Hermes in him, shall we say that this is a wrong name, or not his name at all?

Crat. I should reply that Hermogenes is not his name at all, but only appears to be his, and is really the name of somebody else, who has the nature which corresponds to it.

Soc. And if a man were to call him Hermogenes, would he not be even speaking falsely? For there may be a doubt whether you can call him Hermogenes, if he is not.

Crat. What do you mean?

Soc. Are you maintaining that falsehood is impossible? For if this is your meaning I should answer, that there have been plenty of liars in all ages.

Cratylus denies the existence of falsehood, which he declares to be only an unmeaning sound. This is too much for the common sense of Socrates.

Crat. Why, Socrates, how can a man say that which is not?—say something and yet say nothing? For is not falsehood saying the thing which is not?

Soc. Your argument, friend, is too subtle for a man of my age. But I should like to know whether you are one of those philosophers who think that falsehood may be spoken but not said?

Crat. Neither spoken nor said.

Soc. Nor uttered nor addressed? For example: If a person, saluting you in a foreign country, were to take your hand and say: 'Hail, Athenian stranger, Hermogenes, son of Smicrion'—these words, whether spoken, said, uttered, or

Cratylus. addressed, would have no application to you but only to our friend Hermogenes, or perhaps to nobody at all?

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Crat. In my opinion, Socrates, the speaker would only be talking nonsense.

Soc. Well, but that will be quite enough for me, if you will tell me whether the nonsense would be true or false, or 43
partly true and partly false: — which is all that I want to know.

Crat. I should say that he would be putting himself in motion to no purpose; and that his words would be an unmeaning sound like the noise of hammering at a brazen pot.

Soc. But let us see, Cratylus, whether we cannot find a meeting-point, for you would admit that the name is not the same with the thing named?

Crat. I should.

Soc. And would you further acknowledge that the name is an imitation of the thing?

Crat. Certainly.

Soc. And you would say that pictures are also imitations of things, but in another way?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. I believe you may be right, but I do not rightly understand you. Please to say, then, whether both sorts of imitation (I mean both pictures and words) are not equally attributable and applicable to the things of which they are the imitation.

Crat. They are.

Cratylus is induced to agree that the likeness of a man cannot rightly be attributed to a woman or of a woman to a man;

Soc. First look at the matter thus: you may attribute the likeness of the man to the man, and of the woman to the woman; and so on?

Crat. Certainly.

Soc. And conversely you may attribute the likeness of the man to the woman, and of the woman to the man?

Crat. Very true.

Soc. And are both modes of assigning them right, or only the first?

Crat. Only the first.

Soc. That is to say, the mode of assignment which attributes to each that which belongs to them and is like them?

Crat. Such is my view.

Cratylus.

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Soc. Now then, as I am desirous that we being friends should have a good understanding about the argument, let me state my view to you: the first mode of assignment, whether applied to figures or to names, I call right, and when applied to names only, true as well as right; and the other mode, of giving and assigning the name which is unlike, I call wrong, and in the case of names, false as well as wrong.

Crat. That may be true, Socrates, in the case of pictures; they may be wrongly assigned; but not in the case of names — must they not always be right?

Soc. Why, what is the difference? May I not go to a man and say to him, 'This is your picture,' showing him his own likeness, or perhaps the likeness of a woman; and when I say 'show,' I mean bring before the sense of sight.

Crat. Certainly.

and the same is true of words.

Soc. And may I not go to him again, and say, 'This is your name'? — for the name, like the picture, is an imitation.
431 May I not say to him — 'This is your name'? and may I not then bring to his sense of hearing the imitation of himself, by saying, 'This is a man;' or of a female of the human species, by saying, 'This is a woman,' as the case may be? Is not all that quite possible?

Crat. I would fain agree with you, Socrates; and therefore I say, Granted.

Soc. That is very good of you, if I am right, which need hardly be disputed at present. But if I can assign names as well as pictures to objects, the right assignment of them we may call truth, and the wrong assignment of them falsehood. Now if there be such a wrong assignment of names, there may also be a wrong or inappropriate assignment of verbs; and if of names and verbs then of the sentences, which are made up of them. What do you say, Cratylus?

Crat. I agree; and think that what you say is very true.

And as there are perfect or imperfect pictures, there may be perfect or imper-

Soc. And further, primitive nouns may be compared to pictures, and in pictures you may either give all the appropriate colours and figures, or you may not give them all — some may be wanting; or there may be too many or too much of them — may there not?

Crat. Very true.

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fect representations in words.

Soc. And he who gives all gives a perfect picture or figure; and he who takes away or adds also gives a picture or figure, but not a good one.

Crat. Yes.

Soc. In like manner, he who by syllables and letters imitates the nature of things, if he gives all that is appropriate will produce a good image, or in other words a name; but if he subtracts or perhaps adds a little, he will make an image but not a good one; whence I infer that some names are well and others ill made.

Crat. That is true.

Soc. Then the artist of names may be sometimes good, or he may be bad?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. And this artist of names is called the legislator?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. Then like other artists the legislator may be good or he may be bad; it must surely be so if our former admissions hold good?

Cratylus tries to distinguish the case of language.

Crat. Very true, Socrates; but the case of language, you see, is different; for when by the help of grammar we assign the letters *α* or *β*, or any other letters to a certain name, 43
then, if we add, or subtract, or misplace a letter, the name which is written is not only written wrongly, but not written at all; and in any of these cases becomes other than a name.

Soc. But I doubt whether your view is altogether correct, Cratylus.

Crat. How so?

Soc. I believe that what you say may be true about numbers, which must be just what they are, or not be at all; for example, the number ten at once becomes other than ten if a unit be added or subtracted, and so of any other number: but this does not apply to that which is qualitative or to anything which is represented under an image. I should say rather that the image, if expressing in every point the entire reality, would no longer be an image. Let us suppose

Socrates replies that language is an image, and that no image is ever perfect.

the existence of two objects: one of them shall be Cratylus, and the other the image of Cratylus; and we will suppose, further, that some God makes not only a representation such as a painter would make of your outward form and colour,

but also creates an inward organization like yours, having the same warmth and softness; and into this infuses motion, and soul, and mind, such as you have, and in a word copies all your qualities, and places them by you in another form; would you say that this was Cratylus and the image of Cratylus, or that there were two Cratyluses?

Cratylus.

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If it were it would be no longer an image.

Crat. I should say that there were two Cratyluses.

Soc. Then you see, my friend, that we must find some other principle of truth in images, and also in names; and not insist that an image is no longer an image when something is added or subtracted. Do you not perceive that images are very far from having qualities which are the exact counterpart of the realities which they represent?

Crat. Yes, I see.

Soc. But then how ridiculous would be the effect of names on things, if they were exactly the same with them! For they would be the doubles of them, and no one would be able to determine which were the names and which were the realities.

Crat. Quite true.

Soc. Then fear not, but have the courage to admit that one name may be correctly and another incorrectly given; and do not insist that the name shall be exactly the same with the thing; but allow the occasional substitution of a wrong letter, and if of a letter also of a noun in a sentence, and if of a noun in a sentence also of a sentence which is not appropriate to the matter, and acknowledge that the thing may be named, and described, so long as the general character of the thing which you are describing is retained; and this, as you will remember, was remarked by Hermogenes and myself in the particular instance of the names of the letters.

Crat. Yes, I remember.

Soc. Good; and when the general character is preserved, even if some of the proper letters are wanting, still the thing is signified; — well, if all the letters are given; not well, when only a few of them are given. I think that we had better admit this, lest we be punished like travellers in Ægina who wander about the street late at night: and be likewise told by truth herself that we have arrived too late;

We shall only waste time and contradict ourselves if we deny that the general character of something

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may be incorrectly represented as well as correctly.

or if not, you must find out some new notion of correctness of names, and no longer maintain that a name is the expression of a thing in letters or syllables; for if you say both, you will be inconsistent with yourself.

Crat. I quite acknowledge, Socrates, what you say to be very reasonable.

Soc. Then as we are agreed thus far, let us ask ourselves whether a name rightly imposed ought not to have the proper letters.

Crat. Yes.

Soc. And the proper letters are those which are like the things?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. Enough then of names which are rightly given. And in names which are incorrectly given, the greater part may be supposed to be made up of proper and similar letters, or there would be no likeness; but there will be likewise a part which is improper and spoils the beauty and formation of the word: you would agree with me?

Crat. There would be no use, Socrates, in my quarrelling with you, since I cannot be satisfied that a name which is incorrectly given is a name at all.

Soc. Do you admit a name to be the representation of a thing?

Crat. Yes, I do.

Soc. But do you not allow that some nouns are primitive, and some derived?

Crat. Yes, I do.

Assimilation or convention, which do you prefer?

Soc. Then if you admit that primitive or first nouns are representations of things, is there any better way of framing representations than by assimilating them to the objects as much as you can; or do you prefer the notion of Hermogenes and of many others, who say that names are conventional, and have a meaning to those who have agreed about them, and who have previous knowledge of the things intended by them, and that convention is the only principle; and whether you abide by our present convention, or make a new and opposite one, according to which you call small great and great small,— they would say that it makes no

difference, if you are only agreed. Which of these two notions do you prefer?

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Crat. Representation by likeness, Socrates, is infinitely better than representation by any chance sign.

Soc. Very good: but if the name is to be like the thing, the letters out of which the first names are composed must also be like things. Returning to the image of the picture, I would ask, How could any one ever compose a picture which would be like anything at all, if there were not pigments in nature which resembled the things imitated, and out of which the picture is composed?

Crat. Impossible.

Soc. No more could names ever resemble any actually existing thing, unless the original elements of which they are compounded bore some degree of resemblance to the objects of which the names are the imitation: And the original elements are letters?

Crat. Yes.

Resemblance of sounds to things is the first principle of language.

Soc. Let me now invite you to consider what Hermogenes and I were saying about sounds. Do you agree with me that the letter ῥ is expressive of rapidity, motion, and hardness? Were we right or wrong in saying so?

Crat. I should say that you were right.

Soc. And that λ was expressive of smoothness, and softness, and the like?

Crat. There again you were right.

Soc. And yet, as you are aware, that which is called by us σκληρότης, is by the Eretrians called σκληρότηρ.

Crat. Very true.

Soc. But are the letters ρ and σ equivalents; and is there the same significance to them in the termination ῥ, which there is to us in σ, or is there no significance to one of us?

Crat. Nay, surely there is a significance to both of us.

Soc. In as far as the two letters are like, or in as far as they are unlike?

Crat. In as far as they are like.

Soc. Are they altogether alike?

Crat. Yes; for the purpose of expressing motion.

Soc. And what do you say of the insertion of the λ? for that is expressive not of hardness but of softness.

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Crat. Why, perhaps the letter λ is wrongly inserted, Socrates, and should be altered into ῥ, as you were saying to Hermogenes, and in my opinion rightly, when you spoke of adding and subtracting letters upon occasion.

Soc. Good. But still the word is intelligible to both of us; when I say σκληρὸς (hard), you know what I mean.

Crat. Yes, my dear friend, and of this the explanation is custom.

Soc. And what is custom but convention? I utter a sound which I understand, and you know that I understand the meaning of the sound: this is what you are saying?

Crat. Yes.

Soc. And if when I speak you know my meaning, there is an indication given by me to you?

Crat. Yes.

But there is unlikeness as well as likeness in names to things, and therefore convention or custom must also be allowed to have a place.

Soc. This indication of my meaning may proceed from unlike as well as from like, for example in the λ of σκληρότης. But if this is true, then you have made a convention with yourself, and the correctness of a name turns out to be convention, since letters which are unlike are indicative equally with those which are like, if they are sanctioned by custom and convention. And even supposing that you distinguish custom from convention ever so much, still you must say that the signification of words is given by custom and not by likeness, for custom may indicate by the unlike as well as by the like. But as we are agreed thus far, Cratylus (for I shall assume that your silence gives consent), then custom and convention must be supposed to contribute to the indication of our thoughts; for suppose we take the instance of number, how can you ever imagine, my good friend, that you will find names resembling every individual number, unless you allow that which you term convention and agreement to have authority in determining the correctness of names? I quite agree with you that words should as far as possible resemble things; but I fear that this dragging in of resemblance, as Hermogenes says[1], is a shabby thing, which has to be supplemented by the mechanical aid of convention with a view to correctness; for I believe that if we could always, or almost always, use likenesses, which are

[1] *Vide supra*, 414 C.

perfectly appropriate, this would be the most perfect state of language; as the opposite is the most imperfect. But let me ask you, what is the force of names, and what is the use of them?

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Crat. The use of names, Socrates, as I should imagine, is to inform: the simple truth is, that he who knows names knows also the things which are expressed by them.

Cratylus maintains that he who knows names also knows things.

Soc. I suppose you mean to say, Cratylus, that as the name is, so also is the thing; and that he who knows the one will also know the other, because they are similars, and all similars fall under the same art or science; and therefore you would say that he who knows names will also know things.

Crat. That is precisely what I mean.

Soc. But let us consider what is the nature of this information about things which, according to you, is given us by names. Is it the best sort of information? or is there any other? What do you say?

436 *Crat.* I believe it to be both the only and the best sort of information about them; there can be no other.

Soc. But do you believe that in the discovery of them, he who discovers the names discovers also the things; or is this only the method of instruction, and is there some other method of enquiry and discovery.

Crat. I certainly believe that the methods of enquiry and discovery are of the same nature as instruction.

Soc. Well, but do you not see, Cratylus, that he who follows names in the search after things, and analyses their meaning, is in great danger of being deceived?

Crat. How so?

Soc Why clearly he who first gave names gave them according to his conception of the things which they signified — did he not?

But supposing that the original giver of names was mistaken, what then?

Crat. True.

Soc. And if his conception was erroneous, and he gave names according to his conception, in what position shall we who are his followers find ourselves? Shall we not be deceived by him?

Crat. But, Socrates, am I not right in thinking that he must surely have known; or else, as I was saying, his

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names would not be names at all? And you have a clear proof that he has not missed the truth, and the proof is—that he is perfectly consistent. Did you ever observe in speaking that all the words which you utter have a common character and purpose?

He may have been perfectly consistent, and yet have proceeded on a false principle.

Soc. But that, friend Cratylus, is no answer. For if he did begin in error, he may have forced the remainder into agreement with the original error and with himself; there would be nothing strange in this, any more than in geometrical diagrams, which have often a slight and invisible flaw in the first part of the process, and are consistently mistaken in the long deductions which follow. And this is the reason why every man should expend his chief thought and attention on the consideration of first principles:—are they or are they not rightly laid down? and when he has duly sifted them, all the rest will follow. Now I should be astonished to find that names are really consistent. And here let us revert to our former discussion: Were we not saying that all things are in motion and progress and flux, and that this idea of motion is expressed by names? Do you not conceive that to be the meaning of them?

Crat. Yes; that is assuredly their meaning, and the true meaning.

But names are not really consistent. Many words are expressive of rest, though many more of motion. In any case, however, the truth of a principle cannot be established by majorities.

Soc. Let us revert to *ἐπιστήμη* (knowledge), and observe 4
how ambiguous this word is, seeming rather to signify stopping the soul at things than going round with them; and therefore we should leave the beginning as at present, and not reject the *ε* (cp. 412 A), but make an insertion of an *ι* instead of an *ε* (not *πιστήμη*, but *ἐπιιστήμη*). Take another example: *βέβαιον* (sure) is clearly the expression of station and position, and not of motion. Again, the word *ἱστορία* (enquiry) bears upon the face of it the stopping (*ἱστάναι*) of the stream; and the word *πιστὸν* (faithful) certainly indicates cessation of motion; then, again, *μνήμη* (memory), as any one may see, expresses rest in the soul, and not motion. Moreover, words such as *ἁμαρτία* and *συμφορὰ*, which have a bad sense, viewed in the light of their etymologies will be the same as *σύνεσις* and *ἐπιστήμη* and other words which have a good sense (cp. *ὁμαρτεῖν*, *συνιέναι*, *ἕτεσθαι*, *συμφέρεσφαι*); and much the same may be said of *ἀμθία* and *ἀκολασία*, for *ἀμαθία*

may be explained as ἡ ἅμα θεῷ ἰόντος πορεία, and ἀκολασία as ἡ ἀκολουθία τοῖς πράγμασιν. Thus the names which in these instances we find to have the worst sense, will turn out to be framed on the same principle as those which have the best. And any one I believe who would take the trouble might find many other examples in which the giver of names indicates, not that things are in motion or progress, but that they are at rest; which is the opposite of motion.

Crat. Yes, Socrates, but observe; the greater number express motion.

Soc. What of that, Cratylus? Are we to count them like votes? and is correctness of names the voice of the majority? Are we to say of whichever sort there are most, those are the true ones?

Crat. No; that is not reasonable.

Another question: If the knowledge of things is only given through names, how could the legislators who first gave names have known things? And yet they could hardly have been ignorant.

Soc. Certainly not. But let us have done with this question and proceed to another, about which I should like to know whether you think with me. Were we not lately acknowledging that the first givers of names in states, both Hellenic and barbarous, were the legislators, and that the art which gave names was the art of the legislator?

Crat. Quite true.

Soc. Tell me, then, did the first legislators, who were the givers of the first names, know or not know the things which they named?

Crat. They must have known, Socrates.

438 *Soc.* Why, yes, friend Cratylus, they could hardly have been ignorant.

Crat. I should say not.

Soc. Let us return to the point from which we digressed. You were saying, if you remember, that he who gave names must have known the things which he named; are you still of that opinion?

Crat. I am.

Soc. And would you say that the giver of the first names had also a knowledge of the things which he named?

Crat. I should.

Soc. But how could he have learned or discovered things from names if the primitive names were not yet given? For,

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if we are correct in our view, the only way of learning and discovering things, is either to discover names for ourselves or to learn them from others.

Crat. I think that there is a good deal in what you say, Socrates.

Soc. But if things are only to be known through names, how can we suppose that the givers of names had knowledge, or were legislators before there were names at all, and therefore before they could have known them?

The truth is that God gave language.

Crat. I believe, Socrates, the true account of the matter to be, that a power more than human gave things their first names, and that the names which are thus given are necessarily their true names.

Then how came the inspired giver of language to contradict himself?

Soc. Then how came the giver of the names, if he was an inspired being or God, to contradict himself? For were we not saying just now that he made some names expressive of rest and others of motion? Were we mistaken?

Crat. But I suppose one of the two not to be names at all.

Soc. And which, then, did he make, my good friend; those which are expressive of rest, or those which are expressive of motion? This is a point which, as I said before, cannot be determined by counting them.

Crat. No; not in that way, Socrates.

and how can we distinguish between the true and false in language?

Soc. But if this is a battle of names, some of them asserting that they are like the truth, others contending that *they* are, how or by what criterion are we to decide between them? For there are no other names to which appeal can be made, but obviously recourse must be had to another standard which, without employing names, will make clear which of the two are right; and this must be a standard which shows the truth of things.

Crat. I agree.

We must know things without words.

Soc. But if that is true, Cratylus, then I suppose that things may be known without names?

Crat. Clearly.

Soc. But how would you expect to know them? What other way can there be of knowing them, except the true and natural way, through their affinities, when they are akin to each other, and through themselves? For that which is

other and different from them must signify something other and different from them.

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Crat. What you are saying is, I think, true.

439 *Soc.* Well, but reflect; have we not several times acknowledged that names rightly given are the likenesses and images of the things which they name?

Crat. Yes.

Which is the nobler way — to study things in names or in themselves?

Soc. Let us suppose that to any extent you please you can learn things through the medium of names, and suppose also that you can learn them from the things themselves — which is likely to be the nobler and clearer way; to learn of the image, whether the image and the truth of which the image is the expression have been rightly conceived, or to learn of the truth whether the truth and the image of it have been duly executed?

Crat. I should say that we must learn of the truth.

Soc. How real existence is to be studied or discovered is, I suspect, beyond you and me. But we may admit so much, that the knowledge of things is not to be derived from names. No; they must be studied and investigated in themselves.

Crat. Clearly, Socrates.

But are there things in themselves?

Soc. There is another point. I should not like us to be imposed upon by the appearance of such a multitude of names, all tending in the same direction. I myself do not deny that the givers of names did really give them under the idea that all things were in motion and flux; which was their sincere but, I think, mistaken opinion. And having fallen into a kind of whirlpool themselves, they are carried round, and want to drag us in after them. There is a matter, master Cratylus, about which I often dream, and should like to ask your opinion: Tell me, whether there is or is not any absolute beauty or good, or any other absolute existence?

Crat. Certainly, Socrates, I think so.

Soc. Then let us seek the true beauty: not asking whether a face is fair, or anything of that sort, for all such things appear to be in a flux; but let us ask whether the true beauty is not always beautiful.

Crat. Certainly.

Cratylus. *Soc.* And can we rightly speak of a beauty which is always passing away, and is first this and then that; must not the same thing be born and retire and vanish while the word is in our mouths?

SOCRATES, CRATYLUS.

Not if all is in a state of flux and transition.

Crat. Undoubtedly.

Soc. Then how can that be a real thing which is never in the same state? for obviously things which are the same cannot change while they remain the same; and if they are always the same and in the same state, and never depart from their original form, they can never change or be moved.

Crat. Certainly they cannot.

Soc. Nor yet can they be known by any one; for at the 44
moment that the observer approaches, then they become other and of another nature, so that you cannot get any further in knowing their nature or state, for you cannot know that which has no state.

Crat. True.

Soc. Nor can we reasonably say, Cratylus, that there is knowledge at all, if everything is in a state of transition and there is nothing abiding; for knowledge too cannot continue to be knowledge unless continuing always to abide and exist. But if the very nature of knowledge changes, at the time when the change occurs there will be no knowledge; and if the transition is always going on, there will always be no knowledge, and, according to this view, there will be no one to know and nothing to be known: but if that which knows and that which is known exists ever, and the beautiful and the good and every other thing also exist, then I do not think that they can resemble a process or flux, as we were just now supposing. Whether there is this eternal nature in things, or whether the truth is what Heracleitus and his followers and many others say, is a question hard to determine; and no man of sense will like to put himself or the education of his mind in the power of names: neither will he so far trust names or the givers of names as to be confident in any knowledge which condemns himself and other existences to an unhealthy state of unreality; he will not believe that all things leak like a pot, or imagine that the world is a man who has a running at the nose. This may be true, Cratylus, but is also very likely to be untrue;

and therefore I would not have you be too easily persuaded of it. Reflect well and like a man, and do not easily accept such a doctrine; for you are young and of an age to learn. And when you have found the truth, come and tell me.

Crat. I will do as you say, though I can assure you, Socrates, that I have been considering the matter already, and the result of a great deal of trouble and consideration is that I incline to Heracleitus.

Soc. Then, another day, my friend, when you come back, you shall give me a lesson; but at present, go into the country, as you are intending, and Hermogenes shall set you on your way.

Crat. Very good, Socrates; I hope, however, that you will continue to think about these things yourself.

PHAEDRUS.

INTRODUCTION.

Phaedrus. INTRODUCTION.

THE Phaedrus is closely connected with the Symposium, and may be regarded either as introducing or following it. The two Dialogues together contain the whole philosophy of Plato on the nature of love, which in the Republic and in the later writings of Plato is only introduced playfully or as a figure of speech. But in the Phaedrus and Symposium love and philosophy join hands, and one is an aspect of the other. The spiritual and emotional part is elevated into the ideal, to which in the Symposium mankind are described as looking forward, and which in the Phaedrus, as well as in the Phaedo, they are seeking to recover from a former state of existence. Whether the chief subject of the Dialogue is love or rhetoric, or the union of the two, or the relation of philosophy to love and to art in general, and to the human soul, will be hereafter considered. And perhaps we may arrive at some conclusion such as the following — that the dialogue is not strictly confined to a single subject, but passes from one to another with the natural freedom of conversation.

ANALYSIS.

Steph. 227 Phaedrus has been spending the morning with Lysias, the celebrated rhetorician, and is going to refresh himself by taking a walk outside the wall, when he is met by Socrates, who professes that he will not leave him until he has delivered up the speech 228 with which Lysias has regaled him, and which he is carrying about in his mind, or more probably in a book hidden under his cloak, and is intending to study as he walks. The imputation is not denied, and the two agree to direct their steps out of the public way along the stream of the Ilissus towards a plane-tree which is seen in the distance. There, lying down amidst pleasant sounds and scents, they will read the speech of Lysias. The 229 country is a novelty to Socrates, who never goes out of the town;

and hence he is full of admiration for the beauties of nature, which he seems to be drinking in for the first time.

As they are on their way, Phaedrus asks the opinion of Socrates respecting the local tradition of Boreas and Oreithyia. Socrates, after a satirical allusion to the 'rationalizers' of his day, replies that he has no time for these 'nice' interpretations of mythology, and he pities any one who has. When you once begin there is no end of them, and they spring from an uncritical philosophy after all. 'The proper study of mankind is man;' and he is a far more complex and wonderful being than the serpent Typho. Socrates 23
as yet does not know himself; and why should he care to know about unearthly monsters? Engaged in such conversation, they arrive at the plane-tree; when they have found a convenient resting-place, Phaedrus pulls out the speech and reads:—

The speech consists of a foolish paradox which is to the effect that the non-lover ought to be accepted rather than the lover— 23
because he is more rational, more agreeable, more enduring, less suspicious, less hurtful, less boastful, less engrossing, and because there are more of them, and for a great many other reasons which are equally unmeaning. Phaedrus is captivated with the beauty of the periods, and wants to make Socrates say that nothing was or ever could be written better. Socrates does not think much of 23
the matter, but then he has only attended to the form, and in that he has detected several repetitions and other marks of haste. He cannot agree with Phaedrus in the extreme value which he sets upon this performance, because he is afraid of doing injustice to Anacreon and Sappho and other great writers, and is almost inclined to think that he himself, or rather some power residing within him, could make a speech better than that of Lysias on the same theme, and also different from his, if he may be allowed the 23
use of a few commonplaces which all speakers must equally employ.

Phaedrus is delighted at the prospect of having another speech, and promises that he will set up a golden statue of Socrates at Delphi, if he keeps his word. Some raillery ensues, and at length Socrates, conquered by the threat that he shall never again hear a speech of Lysias unless he fulfils his promise, veils his face 23
and begins.

First, invoking the Muses and assuming ironically the person of

the non-lover (who is a lover all the same), he will enquire into the nature and power of love. For this is a necessary preliminary to the other question — How is the non-lover to be distinguished from the lover? In all of us there are two principles — a better and a worse — reason and desire, which are generally at war with one another; and the victory of the rational is called temperance, and the victory of the irrational intemperance or excess. The
238 latter takes many forms and has many bad names — gluttony, drunkenness, and the like. But of all the irrational desires or excesses the greatest is that which is led away by the desire of a kindred nature to the enjoyment of personal beauty. And this is the master power of love.

Here Socrates fancies that he detects in himself an unusual flow of eloquence — this newly-found gift he can only attribute to the inspiration of the place, which appears to be dedicated to the
239 nymphs. Starting again from the philosophical basis which has been laid down, he proceeds to show how many advantages the non-lover has over the lover. The one encourages softness and effeminacy and exclusiveness; he cannot endure any superiority in his beloved; he will train him in luxury, he will keep him out
240 of society, he will deprive him of parents, friends, money, knowledge, and of every other good, that he may have him all to himself. Then again his ways are not ways of pleasantness; he is mighty disagreeable; 'crabbed age and youth cannot live together.' At every hour of the night and day he is intruding upon him; there is the same old withered face and the remainder to match — and he is always repeating, in season or out of season, the praises or dispraises of his beloved, which are bad enough when he is sober,
241 and published all over the world when he is drunk. At length his love ceases; he is converted into an enemy, and the spectacle may be seen of the lover running away from the beloved, who pursues him with vain reproaches, and demands his reward which the other refuses to pay. Too late the beloved learns, after all his pains and disagreeables, that 'As wolves love lambs so lovers love their loves.' (Cp. Charm. 155 D.) Here is the end; the 'other' or 'non-lover' part of the speech had better be understood, for if in the censure of the lover Socrates has broken out in verse, what
242 will he not do in his praise of the non-lover? He has said his say and is preparing to go away.

Phaedrus begs him to remain, at any rate until the heat of noon has passed; he would like to have a little more conversation before they go. Socrates, who has risen, recognizes the oracular sign which forbids him to depart until he has done penance. His 24
conscience has been awakened, and like Stesichorus when he had reviled the lovely Helen he will sing a palinode for having blasphemed the majesty of love. His palinode takes the form of a myth.

Socrates begins his tale with a glorification of madness, which 24
he divides into four kinds: first, there is the art of divination or prophecy — this, in a vein similar to that pervading the Cratylus and Ion, he connects with madness by an etymological explanation (*μαντική, μανική* — compare *οἰονοιστική, οἰωνιστική*, ' 'tis all one reckoning, save the phrase is a little variation'); secondly, there is the art of purification by mysteries; thirdly, poetry or the inspiration 24
of the Muses (cp. Ion 533 foll.), without which no man can enter their temple. All this shows that madness is one of heaven's blessings, and may sometimes be a great deal better than sense. There is also a fourth kind of madness — that of love — which cannot be explained without enquiring into the nature of the soul.

All soul is immortal, for she is the source of all motion both in herself and in others. Her form may be described in a figure as 24
a composite nature made up of a charioteer and a pair of winged steeds. The steeds of the gods are immortal, but ours are one mortal and the other immortal. The immortal soul soars upwards into the heavens, but the mortal drops her plumes and settles upon the earth.

Now the use of the wing is to rise and carry the downward element into the upper world — there to behold beauty, wisdom, goodness, and the other things of God by which the soul is nourished. On a certain day Zeus the lord of heaven goes forth 2
in a winged chariot; and an array of gods and demi-gods and of human souls in their train, follows him. There are glorious and blessed sights in the interior of heaven, and he who will may freely behold them. The great vision of all is seen at the feast of the gods, when they ascend the heights of the empyrean — all but Hestia, who is left at home to keep house. The chariots of the gods glide readily upwards and stand upon the outside; the

revolution of the spheres carries them round, and they have a vision of the world beyond. But the others labour in vain; for the mortal steed, if he has not been properly trained, keeps them down and sinks them towards the earth. Of the world which is beyond the heavens, who can tell? There is an essence formless, colourless, intangible, perceived by the mind only, dwelling in the region of true knowledge. The divine mind in her revolution enjoys this fair prospect, and beholds justice, temperance, and knowledge in their everlasting essence. When fulfilled with the sight of them she returns home, and the charioteer puts up the
248 horses in their stable, and gives them ambrosia to eat and nectar to drink. This is the life of the gods; the human soul tries to reach the same heights, but hardly succeeds; and sometimes the head of the charioteer rises above, and sometimes sinks below, the fair vision, and he is at last obliged, after much contention, to turn away and leave the plain of truth. But if the soul has followed in the train of her god and once beheld truth she is preserved from harm, and is carried round in the next revolution of the spheres; and if always following, and always seeing the truth, is then for ever unharmed. If, however, she drops her wings and falls to the earth, then she takes the form of man, and the soul which has seen most of the truth passes into a philosopher or lover; that which has seen truth in the second degree, into a king or warrior; the third, into a politician or money-maker; the fourth, into a gymnast; the fifth, into a prophet or mystic; the sixth, into a poet or imitator; the seventh, into a husbandman or craftsman; the eighth, into a sophist or demagogue; the ninth, into a tyrant. All these are states of probation, wherein he who lives righteously is improved, and he who lives unrighteously deteriorates. After death comes the judgment; the bad depart to houses of correction under the earth, the good to places of joy in heaven. When a thousand years have elapsed the souls meet together and choose the lives which they will lead for another period of existence. The soul which three times in succession has chosen the life of a philosopher or of a lover who is not without philosophy receives her wings at the close of the third millennium; the remainder have to complete a cycle of ten thousand years before their wings are restored to them. Each time there
249 is full liberty of choice. The soul of a man may descend into a

beast, and return again into the form of man. But the form of man will only be taken by the soul which has once seen truth and acquired some conception of the universal: — this is the recollection of the knowledge which she attained when in the company of the Gods. And men in general recall only with difficulty the things of another world, but the mind of the philosopher has a better remembrance of them. For when he beholds the visible beauty of earth his enraptured soul passes in thought to those glorious sights of justice and wisdom and temperance and truth which she once gazed upon in heaven. Then she celebrated holy mysteries and beheld blessed apparitions shining in pure light, herself pure, and not as yet entombed in the body. And still, like a bird eager to quit its cage, she flutters and looks upwards, and is therefore deemed mad. Such a recollection of past days she receives through sight, the keenest of our senses, because beauty, alone of the ideas, has any representation on earth: wisdom is invisible to mortal eyes. But the corrupted nature, blindly excited by this vision of beauty, rushes on to enjoy, and would fain wallow like a brute beast in sensual pleasures. Whereas the true mystic, who has seen the many sights of bliss, when he beholds a god-like form or face is amazed with delight, and if he were not afraid of being thought mad he would fall down and worship. Then the stiffened wing begins to relax and grow again; desire which has been imprisoned pours over the soul of the lover; the germ of the wing unfolds, and stings, and pangs of birth, like the cutting of teeth, are everywhere felt. (Cp. Symp. 206 foll.) Father and mother, and goods and laws and proprieties are nothing to him; his beloved is his physician, who can alone cure his pain. An apocryphal sacred writer says that the power which thus works in him is by mortals called love, but the immortals call him dove, or the winged one, in order to represent the force of his wings — such at any rate is his nature. Now the characters of lovers depend upon the god whom they followed in the other world; and they choose their loves in this world accordingly. The followers of Ares are fierce and violent; those of Zeus seek out some philosophical and imperial nature; the attendants of Here find a royal love; and in like manner the followers of every god seek a love who is like their god; and to him they communicate the nature which they

have received from their god. The manner in which they take their love is as follows: —

I told you about the charioteer and his two steeds, the one a noble animal who is guided by word and admonition only, the other an ill-looking villain who will hardly yield to blow or spur. Together all three, who are a figure of the soul, approach the
254 vision of love. And now a fierce conflict begins. The ill-conditioned steed rushes on to enjoy, but the charioteer, who beholds the beloved with awe, falls back in adoration, and forces both the steeds on their haunches; again the evil steed rushes forwards and pulls shamelessly. The conflict grows more and more severe; and at last the charioteer, throwing himself backwards, forces the bit out of the clenched teeth of the brute, and pulling harder than ever at the reins, covers his tongue and jaws with blood, and forces him to rest his legs and haunches with pain upon the ground. When this has happened several times, the villain is tamed and humbled, and from that time forward the soul of the lover follows the beloved in modesty and
255 holy fear. And now their bliss is consummated; the same image of love dwells in the breast of either; and if they have self-control, they pass their lives in the greatest happiness which is attainable by man — they continue masters of themselves, and
256 conquer in one of the three heavenly victories. But if they choose the lower life of ambition they may still have a happy destiny, though inferior, because they have not the approval of the whole soul. At last they leave the body and proceed on their pilgrim's progress, and those who have once begun can never go back. When the time comes they receive their wings and fly away, and the lovers have the same wings.

Socrates concludes: —

257 These are the blessings of love, and thus have I made my recantation in finer language than before: I did so in order to please Phaedrus. If I said what was wrong at first, please to attribute my error to Lysias, who ought to study philosophy instead of rhetoric, and then he will not mislead his disciple Phaedrus.

Phaedrus is afraid that he will lose conceit of Lysias, and that Lysias will be out of conceit with himself, and leave off making speeches, for the politicians have been deriding him. Socrates is

of opinion that there is small danger of this; the politicians are themselves the great rhetoricians of the age, who desire to attain immortality by the authorship of laws. And therefore there is nothing with which they can reproach Lysias in being a writer; but there may be disgrace in being a bad one.

And what is good or bad writing or speaking? While the sun is hot in the sky above us, let us ask that question; since by rational conversation man lives, and not by the indulgence of bodily pleasures. And the grasshoppers who are chirruping around may carry our words to the Muses, who are their patronesses; for the grasshoppers were human beings themselves in a world before the Muses, and when the Muses came they died of hunger for the love of song. And they carry to them in heaven the report of those who honour them on earth.

The first rule of good speaking is to know and speak the truth; as a Spartan proverb says, 'true art is truth'; whereas rhetoric is an art of enchantment, which makes things appear good and evil, like and unlike, as the speaker pleases. Its use is not confined, as people commonly suppose, to arguments in the law courts and speeches in the assembly; it is rather a part of the art of disputation, under which are included both the rules of Gorgias and the eristic of Zeno. But it is not wholly devoid of truth. Superior knowledge enables us to deceive another by the help of resemblances, and to escape from such a deception when employed against ourselves. We see therefore that even in rhetoric an element of truth is required. For if we do not know the truth, we can neither make the gradual departures from truth by which men are most easily deceived, nor guard ourselves against deception.

Socrates then proposes that they shall use the two speeches as illustrations of the art of rhetoric; first distinguishing between the debatable and undisputed class of subjects. In the debatable class there ought to be a definition of all disputed matters. But there was no such definition in the speech of Lysias; nor is there any order or connection in his words any more than in a nursery rhyme. With this he compares the regular divisions of the other speech, which was his own (and yet not his own, for the local deities must have inspired him). Although only a playful composition, it will be found to embody two principles: first, that of

266 synthesis or the comprehension of parts in a whole; secondly, analysis, or the resolution of the whole into parts. These are the processes of division and generalization which are so dear to the dialectician, that king of men. They are effected by dialectic, and not by rhetoric, of which the remains are but scanty after order and arrangement have been subtracted. There is nothing left but a heap of 'ologies' and other technical terms invented by
267 Polus, Theodorus, Evenus, Tisias, Gorgias, and others, who have rules for everything, and who teach how to be short or long at pleasure. Prodicus showed his good sense when he said that there was a better thing than either to be short or long, which was to be of convenient length.

268 Still, notwithstanding the absurdities of Polus and others, rhetoric has great power in public assemblies. This power, however, is not given by any technical rules, but is the gift of genius. The real art is always being confused by rhetoricians
269 with the preliminaries of the art. The perfection of oratory is like the perfection of anything else; natural power must be aided by art. But the art is not that which is taught in the schools of rhetoric; it is nearer akin to philosophy. Pericles, for instance, who
270 was the most accomplished of all speakers, derived his eloquence not from rhetoric but from the philosophy of nature which he learnt of Anaxagoras. True rhetoric is like medicine, and the
271 rhetorician has to consider the natures of men's souls as the physician considers the natures of their bodies. Such and such persons are to be affected in this way, such and such others in that; and he must know the times and the seasons for saying this
272 or that. This is not an easy task, and this, if there be such an art, is the art of rhetoric.

273 I know that there are some professors of the art who maintain probability to be stronger than truth. But we maintain that probability is engendered by likeness of the truth which can only be attained by the knowledge of it, and that the aim of the good
274 man should not be to please or persuade his fellow-servants, but to please his good masters who are the gods. Rhetoric has a fair beginning in this.

Enough of the art of speaking; let us now proceed to consider the true use of writing. There is an old Egyptian tale of Theuth, the inventor of writing, showing his invention to the god Thamus,

Phaedrus. ANALYSIS.

who told him that he would only spoil men's memories and take away their understandings. From this tale, of which young Athens will probably make fun, may be gathered the lesson that writing is inferior to speech. For it is like a picture, which can give no answer to a question, and has only a deceitful likeness of a living creature. It has no power of adaptation, but uses the same words for all. It is not a legitimate son of knowledge, but a bastard, and when an attack is made upon this bastard neither parent nor any one else is there to defend it. The husbandman will not seriously incline to sow his seed in such a hot-bed or garden of Adonis; he will rather sow in the natural soil of the human soul which has depth of earth; and he will anticipate the inner growth of the mind, by writing only, if at all, as a remedy against the forgetfulness of age. The natural process will be far nobler, and will bring forth fruit in the minds of others as well as in his own.

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The conclusion of the whole matter is just this,—that until a man knows the truth, and the manner of adapting the truth to the natures of other men, he cannot be a good orator; also, that the living is better than the written word, and that the principles of justice and truth when delivered by word of mouth are the legitimate offspring of a man's own bosom, and their lawful descendants take up their abode in others. Such an orator as he is who is possessed of them, you and I would fain become. And to all composers in the world, poets, orators, legislators, we hereby announce that if their compositions are based upon these principles, then they are not only poets, orators, legislators, but philosophers. All others are mere flatterers and putters together of words. This is the message which Phaedrus undertakes to carry to Lysias from the local deities, and Socrates himself will carry a similar message to his favourite Isocrates, whose future distinction as a great rhetorician he prophesies. The heat of the day has passed, and after offering up a prayer to Pan and the nymphs, Socrates and Phaedrus depart.

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INTRODUCTION.

There are two principal controversies which have been raised about the Phaedrus; the first relates to the subject, the second to the date of the Dialogue.

There seems to be a notion that the work of a great artist

like Plato cannot fail in unity, and that the unity of a dialogue requires a single subject. But the conception of unity really applies in very different degrees and ways to different kinds of art; to a statue, for example, far more than to any kind of literary composition, and to some species of literature far more than to others. Nor does the dialogue appear to be a style of composition in which the requirement of unity is most stringent; nor should the idea of unity derived from one sort of art be hastily transferred to another. The double titles of several of the Platonic Dialogues are a further proof that the severer rule was not observed by Plato. The Republic is divided between the search after justice and the construction of the ideal state; the Parmenides between the criticism of the Platonic ideas and of the Eleatic one or being; the Gorgias between the art of speaking and the nature of the good; the Sophist between the detection of the Sophist and the correlation of ideas. The Theaetetus, the Politicus, and the Philebus have also digressions which are but remotely connected with the main subject.

Thus the comparison of Plato's other writings, as well as the reason of the thing, lead us to the conclusion that we must not expect to find one idea pervading a whole work, but one, two, or more, as the invention of the writer may suggest, or his fancy wander. If each dialogue were confined to the development of a single idea, this would appear on the face of the dialogue, nor could any controversy be raised as to whether the Phaedrus treated of love or rhetoric. But the truth is that Plato subjects himself to no rule of this sort. Like every great artist he gives unity of form to the different and apparently distracting topics which he brings together. He works freely and is not to be supposed to have arranged every part of the dialogue before he begins to write. He fastens or weaves together the frame of his discourse loosely and imperfectly, and which is the warp and which is the woof cannot always be determined.

The subjects of the Phaedrus (exclusive of the short introductory passage about mythology which is suggested by the local tradition) are first the false or conventional art of rhetoric; secondly, love or the inspiration of beauty and knowledge, which is described as madness; thirdly, dialectic or the art of composition and division; fourthly, the true rhetoric, which is based

upon dialectic, and is neither the art of persuasion nor knowledge of the truth alone, but the art of persuasion founded on knowledge of truth and knowledge of character; fifthly, the superiority of the spoken over the written word. The continuous thread which appears and reappears throughout is rhetoric; this is the ground into which the rest of the Dialogue is worked, here and there embroidered with fine words which are not in Socrates' manner, as he says, 'in order to please Phaedrus.' The speech of Lysias which has thrown Phaedrus into an ecstacy is adduced as an example of the false rhetoric; the first speech of Socrates, though an improvement, partakes of the same character; his second speech, which is full of that higher element said to have been learned of Anaxagoras by Pericles, and which in the midst of poetry does not forget order, is an illustration of the higher or true rhetoric. This higher rhetoric is based upon dialectic, and dialectic is a sort of inspiration akin to love (cp. Symp. 210 foll.); in these two aspects of philosophy the technicalities of rhetoric are absorbed. And so the example becomes also the deeper theme of discourse. The true knowledge of things in heaven and earth is based upon enthusiasm or love of the ideas going before us and ever present to us in this world and in another; and the true order of speech or writing proceeds accordingly. Love, again, has three degrees: first, of interested love corresponding to the conventionalities of rhetoric; secondly, of disinterested or mad love, fixed on objects of sense, and answering, perhaps, to poetry; thirdly, of disinterested love directed towards the unseen, answering to dialectic or the science of the ideas. Lastly, the art of rhetoric in the lower sense is found to rest on a knowledge of the natures and characters of men, which Socrates at the commencement of the Dialogue has described as his own peculiar study.

Thus amid discord a harmony begins to appear; there are many links of connection which are not visible at first sight. At the same time the Phaedrus, although one of the most beautiful of the Platonic Dialogues, is also more irregular than any other. For insight into the world, for sustained irony, for depth of thought, there is no Dialogue superior, or perhaps equal to it. Nevertheless the form of the work has tended to obscure some of Plato's higher aims.

The first speech is composed 'in that balanced style in which the wise love to talk' (Symp. 185 C). The characteristics of rhetoric are insipidity, mannerism, and monotonous parallelism of clauses. There is more rhythm than reason; the creative power of imagination is wanting.

''Tis Greece, but living Greece no more.'

Plato has seized by anticipation the spirit which hung over Greek literature for a thousand years afterwards. Yet doubtless there were some who, like Phaedrus, felt a delight in the harmonious cadence and the pedantic reasoning of the rhetoricians newly imported from Sicily, which had ceased to be awakened in them by really great works, such as the odes of Anacreon or Sappho or the orations of Pericles. That the first speech was really written by Lysias is improbable. Like the poem of Solon, or the story of Thamus and Theuth, or the funeral oration of Aspasia (if genuine), or the pretence of Socrates in the Cratylus that his knowledge of philology is derived from Euthyphro, the invention is really due to the imagination of Plato, and may be compared to the parodies of the Sophists in the Protagoras. Numerous fictions of this sort occur in the Dialogues, and the gravity of Plato has sometimes imposed upon his commentators. The introduction of a considerable writing of another would seem not to be in keeping with a great work of art, and has no parallel elsewhere in Plato.

In the second speech Socrates is exhibited as beating the rhetoricians at their own weapons; he 'an unpractised man and they masters of the art.' True to his character, he must, however, profess that the speech which he makes is not his own, for he knows nothing of himself. (Cp. Symp. 201 D.) Regarded as a rhetorical exercise, the superiority of his speech seems to consist chiefly in a better arrangement of the topics; he begins with a definition of love, and he gives weight to his words by going back to general maxims; a lesser merit is the greater liveliness of Socrates, which hurries him into verse and relieves the monotony of the style.

But Plato had doubtless a higher purpose than to exhibit Socrates as the rival or superior of the Athenian rhetoricians. Even in the speech of Lysias there is a germ of truth, and

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this is further developed in the parallel oration of Socrates. First, passionate love is overthrown by the sophistical or interested, and then both yield to that higher view of love which is afterwards revealed to us. The extreme of commonplace is contrasted with the most ideal and imaginative of speculations. Socrates, half in jest and to satisfy his own wild humour, takes the disguise of Lysias, but he is also in profound earnest and in a deeper vein of irony than usual. Having improvised his own speech, which is based upon the model of the preceding, he condemns them both. Yet the condemnation is not to be taken seriously, for he is evidently trying to express an aspect of the truth. To understand him, we must make abstraction of morality and of the Greek manner of regarding the relation of the sexes. In this, as in his other discussions about love, what Plato says of the loves of men must be transferred to the loves of women before we can attach any serious meaning to his words. Had he lived in our times he would have made the transposition himself. But seeing in his own age the impossibility of woman being the intellectual helpmate or friend of man (except in the rare instances of a Diotima or an Aspasia), seeing that, even as to personal beauty, her place was taken by young mankind instead of womankind, he tries to work out the problem of love without regard to the distinctions of nature. And full of the evils which he recognized as flowing from the spurious form of love, he proceeds with a deep meaning, though partly in joke, to show that the 'non-lover's' love is better than the 'lover's.'

We may raise the same question in another form: Is marriage preferable with or without love? 'Among ourselves,' as we may say, a little parodying the words of Pausanias in the Symposium, 'there would be one answer to this question: the practice and feeling of some foreign countries appears to be more doubtful.' Suppose a modern Socrates, in defiance of the received notions of society and the sentimental literature of the day, alone against all the writers and readers of novels, to suggest this enquiry, would not the younger 'part of the world be ready to take off its coat and run at him might and main?' (Rep. v. 474.) Yet, if like Peisthetaerus in Aristophanes, he could persuade the 'birds' to hear him, retiring a little behind a rampart, not of pots

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and dishes, but of unreadable books, he might have something to say for himself. Might he not argue, 'that a rational being should not follow the dictates of passion in the most important act of his or her life'? Who would willingly enter into a contract at first sight, almost without thought, against the advice and opinion of his friends, at a time when he acknowledges that he is not in his right mind? And yet they are praised by the authors of romances, who reject the warnings of their friends or parents, rather than those who listen to them in such matters. Two inexperienced persons, ignorant of the world and of one another, how can they be said to choose? — they draw lots, whence also the saying, 'marriage is a lottery.' Then he would describe their way of life after marriage; how they monopolize one another's affections to the exclusion of friends and relations: how they pass their days in unmeaning fondness or trivial conversation; how the inferior of the two drags the other down to his or her level; how the cares of a family 'breed meanness in their souls.' In the fulfilment of military or public duties, they are not helpers but hinderers of one another: they cannot undertake any noble enterprise, such as makes the names of men and women famous, from domestic considerations. Too late their eyes are opened; they were taken unawares and desire to part company. Better, he would say, a 'little love at the beginning,' for heaven might have increased it; but now their foolish fondness has changed into mutual dislike. In the days of their honeymoon they never understood that they must provide against offences, that they must have interests, that they must learn the art of living as well as loving. Our misogamist will not appeal to Anacreon or Sappho for a confirmation of his view, but to the universal experience of mankind. How much nobler, in conclusion, he will say, is friendship, which does not receive unmeaning praises from novelists and poets, is not exacting or exclusive, is not impaired by familiarity, is much less expensive, is not so likely to take offence, seldom changes, and may be dissolved from time to time without the assistance of the courts. Besides, he will remark that there is a much greater choice of friends than of wives — you may have more of them and they will be far more improving to your mind. They will not keep you dawdling at home, or dancing attendance upon them; or

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withdraw you from the great world and stirring scenes of life and action which would make a man of you.

In such a manner, turning the seamy side outwards, a modern Socrates might describe the evils of married and domestic life. They are evils which mankind in general have agreed to conceal, partly because they are compensated by greater goods. Socrates or Archilochus would soon have to sing a palinode for the injustice done to lovely Helen, or some misfortune worse than blindness might befall them. Then they would take up their parable again and say: —that there were two loves, a higher and a lower, holy and unholy, a love of the mind and a love of the body.

> 'Let me not to the marriage of true minds
> Admit impediments. Love is not love
> Which alters when it alteration finds.
> * * * * * *
> Love 's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
> Within his bending sickle's compass come;
> Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
> But bears it out even to the edge of doom.'

But this true love of the mind cannot exist between two souls, until they are purified from the grossness of earthly passion: they must pass through a time of trial and conflict first; in the language of religion they must be converted or born again. Then they would see the world transformed into a scene of heavenly beauty; a divine idea would accompany them in all their thoughts and actions. Something too of the recollections of childhood might float about them still; they might regain that old simplicity which had been theirs in other days at their first entrance on life. And although their love of one another was ever present to them, they would acknowledge also a higher love of duty and of God, which united them. And their happiness would depend upon their preserving in them this principle — not losing the ideals of justice and holiness and truth, but renewing them at the fountain of light. When they have attained to this exalted state, let them marry (something too may be conceded to the animal nature of man): or live together in holy and innocent friendship. The poet might describe in eloquent words the nature of such a union; how after many struggles the true love was found: how the two passed their lives together in the service of God and man; how

their characters were reflected upon one another, and seemed to grow more like year by year; how they read in one another's eyes the thoughts, wishes, actions of the other; how they saw each other in God; how in a figure they grew wings like doves, and were 'ready to fly away together and be at rest.' And lastly, he might tell how, after a time at no long intervals, first one and then the other fell asleep, and 'appeared to the unwise' to die, but were reunited in another state of being, in which they saw justice and holiness and truth, not according to the imperfect copies of them which are found in this world, but justice absolute in existence absolute, and so of the rest. And they would hold converse not only with each other, but with blessed souls everywhere; and would be employed in the service of God, every soul fulfilling his own nature and character, and would see into the wonders of earth and heaven, and trace the works of creation to their author.

So, partly in jest but also 'with a certain degree of seriousness,' we may appropriate to ourselves the words of Plato. The use of such a parody, though very imperfect, is to transfer his thoughts to our sphere of religion and feeling, to bring him nearer to us and us to him. Like the Scriptures, Plato admits of endless applications, if we allow for the difference of times and manners; and we lose the better half of him when we regard his Dialogues merely as literary compositions. Any ancient work which is worth reading has a practical and speculative as well as a literary interest. And in Plato, more than in any other Greek writer, the local and transitory is inextricably blended with what is spiritual and eternal. Socrates is necessarily ironical; for he has to withdraw from the received opinions and beliefs of mankind. We cannot separate the transitory from the permanent; nor can we translate the language of irony into that of plain reflection and common sense. But we can imagine the mind of Socrates in another age and country; and we can interpret him by analogy with reference to the errors and prejudices which prevail among ourselves. To return to the Phaedrus: —

Both speeches are strongly condemned by Socrates as sinful and blasphemous towards the god Love, and as worthy only of some haunt of sailors to which good manners were unknown.

The meaning of this and other wild language to the same effect, which is introduced by way of contrast to the formality of the two speeches (Socrates has a sense of relief when he has escaped from the trammels of rhetoric), seems to be that the two speeches proceed upon the supposition that love is and ought to be interested, and that no such thing as a real or disinterested passion, which would be at the same time lasting, could be conceived. 'But did I call this "love"? O God, forgive my blasphemy. This is not love. Rather it is the love of the world. But there is another kingdom of love, a kingdom not of this world, divine, eternal. And this other love I will now show you in a mystery.'

Then follows the famous myth, which is a sort of parable, and like other parables ought not to receive too minute an interpretation. In all such allegories there is a great deal which is merely ornamental, and the interpreter has to separate the important from the unimportant. Socrates himself has given the right clue when, in using his own discourse afterwards as the text for his examination of rhetoric, he characterizes it as a 'partly true and tolerably credible mythus' (265 C), in which amid poetical figures, order and arrangement were not forgotten.

The soul is described in magnificent language as the self-moved and the source of motion in all other things. This is the philosophical theme or proem of the whole. But ideas must be given through something, and under the pretext that to realize the true nature of the soul would be not only tedious but impossible, we at once pass on to describe the souls of gods as well as men under the figure of two winged steeds and a charioteer. No connection is traced between the soul as the great motive power and the triple soul which is thus imaged. There is no difficulty in seeing that the charioteer represents the reason, or that the black horse is the symbol of the sensual or concupiscent element of human nature. The white horse also represents rational impulse, but the description in 253, 'a lover of honour and modesty and temperance, and a follower of true glory,' though similar, does not at once recall the 'spirit' (*θυμὸς*) of the Republic. The two steeds really correspond in a figure more nearly to the appetitive and moral or semi-rational soul of Aristotle. And thus, for the first time perhaps in the history of philosophy, we have represented to us the threefold division of psychology. The

image of the charioteer and the steeds has been compared with a similar image which occurs in the verses of Parmenides; but it is important to remark that the horses of Parmenides have no allegorical meaning, and that the poet is only describing his own approach in a chariot to the regions of light and the house of the goddess of truth.

The triple soul has had a previous existence, in which following in the train of some god, from whom she derived her character, she beheld partially and imperfectly the vision of absolute truth. All her after existence, passed in many forms of men and animals, is spent in regaining this. The stages of the conflict are many and various; and she is sorely let and hindered by the animal desires of the inferior or concupiscent steed. Again and again she beholds the flashing beauty of the beloved. But before that vision can be finally enjoyed the animal desires must be subjected.

The moral or spiritual element in man is represented by the immortal steed which, like *θυμὸς* in the Republic, always sides with the reason. Both are dragged out of their course by the furious impulses of desire. In the end something is conceded to the desires, after they have been finally humbled and overpowered. And yet the way of philosophy, or perfect love of the unseen, is total abstinence from bodily delights. 'But all men cannot receive this saying': in the lower life of ambition they may be taken off their guard and stoop to folly unawares, and then, although they do not attain to the highest bliss, yet if they have once conquered they may be happy enough.

The language of the Meno and the Phaedo as well as of the Phaedrus seems to show that at one time of his life Plato was quite serious in maintaining a former state of existence. His mission was to realize the abstract; in that, all good and truth, all the hopes of this and another life seemed to centre. To him abstractions, as we call them, were another kind of knowledge — an inner and unseen world, which seemed to exist far more truly than the fleeting objects of sense which were without him. When we are once able to imagine the intense power which abstract ideas exercised over the mind of Plato, we see that there was no more difficulty to him in realizing the eternal existence of them and of the human minds which were

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associated with them, in the past and future than in the present. The difficulty was not how they could exist, but how they could fail to exist. In the attempt to regain this 'saving' knowledge of the ideas, the sense was found to be as great an enemy as the desires; and hence two things which to us seem quite distinct are inextricably blended in the representation of Plato.

Thus far we may believe that Plato was serious in his conception of the soul as a motive power, in his reminiscence of a former state of being, in his elevation of the reason over sense and passion, and perhaps in his doctrine of transmigration. Was he equally serious in the rest? For example, are we to attribute his tripartite division of the soul to the gods? Or is this merely assigned to them by way of parallelism with men? The latter is the more probable; for the horses of the gods are both white, i. e. their every impulse is in harmony with reason; their dualism, on the other hand, only carries out the figure of the chariot. Is he serious, again, in regarding love as 'a madness'? That seems to arise out of the antithesis to the former conception of love. At the same time he appears to intimate here, as in the Ion, Apology, Meno, and elsewhere, that there is a faculty in man, whether to be termed in modern language genius, or inspiration, or imagination, or idealism, or communion with God, which cannot be reduced to rule and measure. Perhaps, too, he is ironically repeating the common language of mankind about philosophy, and is turning their jest into a sort of earnest. (Cp. Phaedo 61 B; Symp. 218 B.) Or is he serious in holding that each soul bears the character of a god? He may have had no other account to give of the differences of human characters to which he afterwards refers. Or, again, in his absurd derivation of μαντική and οἰωνιστική and ἵμερος (cp. Cratylus)? It is characteristic of the irony of Socrates to mix up sense and nonsense in such a way that no exact line can be drawn between them. And allegory helps to increase this sort of confusion.

As is often the case in the parables and prophecies of Scripture, the meaning is allowed to break through the figure, and the details are not always consistent. When the charioteers and their steeds stand upon the dome of heaven they behold the intangible

invisible essences which are not objects of sight. This is because the force of language can no further go. Nor can we dwell much on the circumstance, that at the completion of ten thousand years all are to return to the place from whence they came; because he represents their return as dependent on their own good conduct in the successive stages of existence. Nor again can we attribute anything to the accidental inference which would also follow, that even a tyrant may live righteously in the condition of life to which fate has called him ('he aiblins might, I dinna ken'). But to suppose this would be at variance with Plato himself and with Greek notions generally. He is much more serious in distinguishing men from animals by their recognition of the universal which they have known in a former state, and in denying that this gift of reason can ever be obliterated or lost. In the language of some modern theologians he might be said to maintain the 'final perseverance' of those who have entered on their pilgrim's progress. Other intimations of a 'metaphysic' or 'theology' of the future may also be discerned in him: (1) The moderate predestinarianism which here, as in the Republic, acknowledges the element of chance in human life, and yet asserts the freedom and responsibility of man; (2) The recognition of a moral as well as an intellectual principle in man under the image of an immortal steed; (3) The notion that the divine nature exists by the contemplation of ideas of virtue and justice — or, in other words, the assertion of the essentially moral nature of God; (4) Again, there is the hint that human life is a life of aspiration only, and that the true ideal is not to be found in art; (5) There occurs the first trace of the distinction between necessary and contingent matter; (6) The conception of the soul itself as the motive power and reason of the universe.

The conception of the philosopher, or the philosopher and lover in one, as a sort of madman, may be compared with the Republic and Theaetetus, in both of which the philosopher is regarded as a stranger and monster upon the earth. The whole myth, like the other myths of Plato, describes in a figure things which are beyond the range of human faculties, or inaccessible to the knowledge of the age. That philosophy should be represented as the inspiration of love is a conception that

will become more familiar to us in the Symposium, and is the expression partly of Plato's enthusiasm for the idea, and is also an indication of the real power exercised by the passion of friendship over the mind of the Greek. The master in the art of love knew that there was a mystery in these feelings and their associations, and especially in the contrast of the sensible and permanent which is afforded by them; and he sought to explain this, as he explained universal ideas, by a reference to a former state of existence. The capriciousness of love is also derived by him from an attachment to some god in a former world. The singular remark that the beloved is more affected than the lover at the final consummation of their love, seems likewise to hint at a psychological truth.

It is difficult to exhaust the meanings of a work like the Phaedrus, which indicates so much more than it expresses; and is full of inconsistencies and ambiguities which were not perceived by Plato himself. For example, when he is speaking of the soul does he mean the human or the divine soul? and are they both equally self-moving and constructed on the same threefold principle? We should certainly be disposed to reply that self-motion is to be attributed to God only; and on the other hand, as has been already implied (p. 412), that the appetitive and passionate elements have no place in His nature. So we should infer from the reason of the thing, but there is no indication in Plato's own writings that this was his meaning. Or, again, when he explains the different characters of men by referring them back to the nature of the God whom they served in a former state of existence, we are inclined to ask whether he is serious: Is he not rather using a mythological figure, here as elsewhere, to draw a veil over things which are beyond the limits of mortal knowledge? Once more, in speaking of beauty is he really thinking of some external form such as might have been expressed in the works of Phidias or Praxiteles; and not rather of an imaginary beauty, of a sort which extinguishes rather than stimulates vulgar love (254 E),— a heavenly beauty like that which flashed from time to time before the eyes of Dante or Bunyan? Surely the latter. But it would be idle to reconcile all the details of the passage: it is a picture, not

a system, and a picture which is for the greater part an allegory, and an allegory which allows the meaning to come through. The image of the charioteer and his steeds is placed side by side with the absolute forms of justice, temperance, and the like, which are abstract ideas only, and which are seen with the eye of the soul in her heavenly journey. The first impression of such a passage, in which no attempt is made to separate the substance from the form, is far truer than an elaborate philosophical analysis.

It is too often forgotten that the whole of the second discourse of Socrates is only an allegory, or figure of speech. For this reason, it is unnecessary to enquire whether the love of which Plato speaks is the love of men or of women. It is really a general idea which includes both, and in which the sensual element, though not wholly eradicated, is reduced to order and measure. We must not attribute a meaning to every fanciful detail. Nor is there any need to call up revolting associations, which as a matter of good taste should be banished, and which were far enough away from the mind of Plato. These and similar passages should be interpreted by the Laws, book viii. 836. Nor is there anything in the Symposium, 219, or in the Charmides, 155 D, in reality inconsistent with the sterner rule which Plato lays down in the Laws. At the same time it is not to be denied that love and philosophy are described by Socrates in figures of speech which would not be used in Christian times; or that nameless vices were prevalent at Athens and in other Greek cities; or that friendships between men were a more sacred tie, and had a more important social and educational influence than among ourselves. (See note on Symposium, sub fin.)

In the Phaedrus, as well as in the Symposium, there are two kinds of love, a lower and a higher, the one answering to the natural wants of the animal, the other rising above them and contemplating with religious awe the forms of justice, temperance, holiness, yet finding them also 'too dazzling bright for mortal eye,' and shrinking from them in amazement. The opposition between these two kinds of love may be compared to the opposition between the flesh and the spirit in the Epistles of St. Paul. It would be unmeaning to suppose that Plato, in describing the spiritual combat, in which the rational soul is

finally victor and master of both the steeds, condescends to allow any indulgence of unnatural lusts.

Two other thoughts about love are suggested by this passage. First of all, love is represented here, as in the Symposium, as one of the great powers of nature, which takes many forms and two principal ones, having a predominant influence over the lives of men. And these two, though opposed, are not absolutely separated the one from the other. Plato, with his great knowledge of human nature, was well aware how easily one is transformed into the other, or how soon the noble but fleeting aspiration may return into the nature of the animal, while the lower instinct which is latent always remains. The intermediate sentimentalism, which has exercised so great an influence on the literature of modern Europe, had no place in the classical times of Hellas; the higher love, of which Plato speaks, is the subject, not of poetry or fiction, but of philosophy.

Secondly, there seems to be indicated a natural yearning of the human mind that the great ideas of justice, temperance, wisdom, should be expressed in some form of visible beauty, like the absolute purity and goodness which Christian art has sought to realize in the person of the Madonna. But although human nature has often attempted to represent outwardly what can be only 'spiritually discerned,' men feel that in pictures and images, whether painted or carved, or described in words only, we have not the substance but the shadow of the truth which is in heaven. There is no reason to suppose that in the fairest works of Greek art, Plato ever conceived himself to behold an image, however faint, of ideal truths. 'Not in that way was wisdom seen' (250 D).

We may now pass on to the second part of the Dialogue, which is a criticism on the first. Rhetoric is assailed on various grounds: first, as desiring to persuade, without a knowledge of the truth; and secondly, as ignoring the distinction between certain and probable matter. The three speeches are then passed in review: the first of them has no definition of the nature of love, and no order in the topics (being in these respects far inferior to the second); while the third of them is found (though a fancy of the hour) to be framed upon real

dialectical principles. But dialectic is not rhetoric; nothing on that subject is to be found in the endless treatises of rhetoric, however prolific in hard names. When Plato has sufficiently put them to the test of ridicule he touches, as with the point of a needle, the real error, which is the confusion of preliminary knowledge with creative power. No attainments will provide the speaker with genius; and the sort of attainments which can alone be of any value are the higher philosophy and the power of psychological analysis, which is given by dialectic, but not by the rules of the rhetoricians.

In this latter portion of the Dialogue there are many texts which may help us to speak and to think. The names dialectic and rhetoric are passing out of use; we hardly examine seriously into their nature and limits, and probably the arts both of speaking and of conversation have been unduly neglected by us. But the mind of Socrates pierces through the differences of times and countries into the essential nature of man; and his words apply equally to the modern world and to the Athenians of old. Would he not have asked of us, or rather is he not asking of us, Whether we have ceased to prefer appearances to reality? Let us take a survey of the professions to which he refers and try them by his standard. Is not all literature passing into criticism, just as Athenian literature in the age of Plato was degenerating into sophistry and rhetoric? We can discourse and write about poems and paintings, but we seem to have lost the gift of creating them. Can we wonder that few of them 'come sweetly from nature,' while ten thousand reviewers (*μάλα μυρίοι*) are engaged in dissecting them? Young men, like Phaedrus, are enamoured of their own literary clique and have but a feeble sympathy with the master-minds of former ages. They recognize 'a *poetical* necessity in the writings of their favourite author, even when he boldly wrote off just what came in his head.' They are beginning to think that Art is enough, just at the time when Art is about to disappear from the world. And would not a great painter, such as Michael Angelo, or a great poet, such as Shakespeare, returning to earth, 'courteously rebuke' us—would he not say that we are putting 'in the place of Art the preliminaries of Art,' confusing Art the expression of mind and truth with Art the composition

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of colours and forms; and perhaps he might more severely chastise some of us for trying to invent 'a new shudder' instead of bringing to the birth living and healthy creations? These he would regard as the signs of an age wanting in original power.

Turning from literature and the arts to law and politics, again we fall under the lash of Socrates. For do we not often make 'the worse appear the better cause,' and do not 'both parties sometimes agree to tell lies'? Is not pleading 'an art of speaking unconnected with the truth'? There is another text of Socrates which must not be forgotten in relation to this subject. In the endless maze of English law is there any 'dividing the whole into parts or reuniting the parts into a whole'—any semblance of an organized being 'having hands and feet and other members'? Instead of a system there is the Chaos of Anaxagoras (*ὁμοῦ πάντα χρήματα*) and no Mind or Order. Then again in the noble art of politics, who thinks of first principles and of true ideas? We avowedly follow not the truth but the will of the many (cp. Rep. 493). Is not legislation too a sort of literary effort, and might not statesmanship be described as the 'art of enchanting' the house? While there are some politicians who have no knowledge of the truth, but only of what is likely to be approved by 'the many who sit in judgment,' there are others who can give no form to their ideal, neither having learned 'the art of persuasion,' nor having any insight into the 'characters of men.' Once more, has not medical science become a professional routine, which many 'practise without being able to say who were their instructors'—the application of a few drugs taken from a book instead of a life-long study of the natures and constitutions of human beings? Do we see as clearly as Hippocrates 'that the nature of the body can only be understood as a whole'? (270 C; cp. Charm. 156 E.) And are not they held to be the wisest physicians who have the greatest distrust of their art? What would Socrates think of our newspapers, of our theology? Perhaps he would be afraid to speak of them; — the one *vox populi*, the other *vox Dei*, he might hesitate to attack them; or he might trace a fanciful connexion between them, and ask doubtfully, whether they are not equally inspired? He would remark that we are always searching for a belief and deploring our unbelief, seeming to prefer popular opinions unverified and contradictory to unpopular truths which

are assured to us by the most certain proofs: that our preachers are in the habit of praising God 'without regard to truth and falsehood, attributing to Him every species of greatness and glory, saying that He is all this and the cause of all that, in order that we may exhibit Him as the fairest and best of all' (Symp. 198), without any consideration of His real nature and character or of the laws by which He governs the world—seeking for a 'private judgment' and not for the truth or 'God's judgment.' What would he say of the Church, which we praise in like manner, 'meaning ourselves' (258 A), without regard to history or experience? Might he not ask, whether we 'care more for the truth of religion, or for the speaker and the country from which the truth comes'? or, whether the 'select wise' are not 'the many' after all? (Symp. 194 C.) So we may fill up the sketch of Socrates, lest, as Phaedrus says, the argument should be too 'abstract and barren of illustrations.' (Cp. Symp., Apol., Euthyphro.)

He next proceeds with enthusiasm to define the royal art of dialectic as the power of dividing a whole into parts and of uniting the parts in a whole, and which may also be regarded (cp. Soph.) as the process of the mind talking with herself. The latter view has probably led Plato to the paradox that speech is superior to writing, in which he may seem also to be doing an injustice to himself. For the two cannot be fairly compared in the manner which Plato suggests. The contrast of the living and dead word, and the example of Socrates, which he has represented in the form of the Dialogue, seem to have misled him. For speech and writing have really different functions; the one is more transitory, more diffuse, more elastic and capable of adaptation to moods and times; the other is more permanent, more concentrated, and is uttered not to this or that person or audience, but to all the world. In the Politicus (294 foll.) the paradox is carried further; the mind or will of the king is preferred to the written law; he is supposed to be the Law personified, the ideal made Life.

Yet in both these statements there is also contained a truth; they may be compared with one another, and also with the other famous paradox, that 'knowledge cannot be taught.' Socrates means to say, that what is truly written is written in the soul,

just as what is truly taught grows up in the soul from within and is not forced upon it from without. When planted in a congenial soil the little seed becomes a tree, and 'the birds of the air build their nests in the branches.' There is an echo of this in the prayer at the end of the Dialogue, 'Give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the inward and outward man be at one.' We may further compare the words of St. Paul, 'Written not on tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart;' and again, 'Ye are my epistles known and read of all men.' There may be a use in writing as a preservative against the forgetfulness of old age, but to live is higher far, to be ourselves the book, or the epistle, the truth embodied in a person, the Word made flesh. Something like this we may believe to have passed before Plato's mind when he affirmed that speech was superior to writing. So in other ages, weary of literature and criticism, of making many books, of writing articles in reviews, some have desired to live more closely in communion with their fellow-men, to speak heart to heart, to speak and act only, and not to write, following the example of Socrates and of Christ. . . . .

Some other touches of inimitable grace and art and of the deepest wisdom may be also noted; such as the prayer or 'collect' which has just been cited, 'Give me beauty,' etc.; or 'the great name which belongs to God alone' (278); or 'the saying of wiser men than ourselves that a man of sense should try to please not his fellow-servants, but his good and noble masters' (274), like St. Paul again; or the description of the 'heavenly originals' at p. 250. . . . .

The chief criteria for determining the date of the Dialogue are (1) the ages of Lysias and Isocrates; (2) the character of the work.

Lysias was born in the year 458; Isocrates in the year 436, about seven years before the birth of Plato. The first of the two great rhetoricians is described as in the zenith of his fame; the second is still young and full of promise. Now it is argued that this must have been written in the youth of Isocrates, when the promise was not yet fulfilled. And thus we should have to assign the Dialogue to a year not later than 406, when Isocrates was thirty and Plato twenty-three years of age, and while Socrates himself was still alive.

Those who argue in this way seem not to reflect how easily Plato can 'invent tales of Egypt or of any other country,' and how careless he is of historical truth or probability. Who would suspect that the wise Critias, the virtuous Charmides, had ended their lives among the thirty tyrants? Who would imagine that Lysias, who is here assailed by Socrates, is the son of his old friend Cephalus? or that Isocrates himself is the enemy of Plato and his school? No arguments can be drawn from the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the characters of Plato. (Else, perhaps, it might be further argued that, judging from their extant remains, insipid rhetoric is far more characteristic of Isocrates than of Lysias.) But Plato makes use of names which have often hardly any connexion with the historical characters to whom they belong. In this instance the comparative favour shown to Isocrates may possibly be accounted for by the circumstance of his belonging to the aristocratical, as Lysias to the democratical party.

Few persons will be inclined to suppose, in the superficial manner of some ancient critics, that a dialogue which treats of love must necessarily have been written in youth. As little weight can be attached to the argument that Plato must have visited Egypt before he wrote the story of Theuth and Thamus. For there is no real proof that he ever went to Egypt; and even if he did, he might have known or invented Egyptian traditions before he went there. The late date of the Phaedrus will have to be established by other arguments than these: the maturity of the thought, the perfection of the style, the insight, the relation to the other Platonic Dialogues, seem to contradict the notion that it could have been the work of a youth of twenty or twenty-three years of age. The cosmological notion of the mind as the *primum mobile*, and the admission of impulse into the immortal nature, also afford grounds for assigning a later date. (Cp. Tim., Soph., Laws.) Add to this that the picture of Socrates, though in some lesser particulars,—e. g. his going without sandals, his habit of remaining within the walls, his emphatic declaration that his study is human nature,—an exact resemblance, is in the main the Platonic and not the real Socrates. Can we suppose 'the young man to have told such lies' about his master while he was still alive? Moreover, when two Dialogues are so closely connected as the Phaedrus and Symposium, there is great improbability in

Phaedrus. INTRODUCTION.

supposing that one of them was written at least twenty years after the other. The conclusion seems to be, that the Dialogue was written at some comparatively late but unknown period of Plato's life, after he had deserted the purely Socratic point of view, but before he had entered on the more abstract speculations of the Sophist or the Philebus. Taking into account the divisions of the soul, the doctrine of transmigration, the contemplative nature of the philosophic life, and the character of the style, we shall not be far wrong in placing the Phaedrus in the neighbourhood of the Republic; remarking only that allowance must be made for the poetical element in the Phaedrus, which, while falling short of the Republic in definite philosophic results, seems to have glimpses of a truth beyond.

Two short passages, which are unconnected with the main subject of the Dialogue, may seem to merit a more particular notice: (1) the *locus classicus* about mythology; (2) the tale of the grasshoppers.

The first passage is remarkable as showing that Plato was entirely free from what may be termed the Euhemerism of his age. For there were Euhemerists in Hellas long before Euhemerus. Early philosophers, like Anaxagoras and Metrodorus, had found in Homer and mythology hidden meanings. Plato, with a truer instinct, rejects these attractive interpretations; he regards the inventor of them as 'unfortunate;' and they draw a man off from the knowledge of himself. There is a latent criticism, and also a poetical sense in Plato, which enable him to discard them, and yet in another way to make use of poetry and mythology as a vehicle of thought and feeling. What would he have said of the discovery of Christian doctrines in these old Greek legends? While acknowledging that such interpretations are 'very nice,' would he not have remarked that they are found in all sacred literatures? They cannot be tested by any criterion of truth, or used to establish any truth; they add nothing to the sum of human knowledge; they are — what we please, and if employed as 'peacemakers' between the new and old are liable to serious misconstruction, as he elsewhere remarks (Rep. ii. 378 E). And therefore he would have 'bid Farewell to them; the study of them would take up too much of his time; and he has not as yet learned the true nature of religion.' The 'sophistical'

interest of Phaedrus, the little touch about the two versions of the story, the ironical manner in which these explanations are set aside — 'the common opinion about them is enough for me' — the allusion to the serpent Typho may be noted in passing; also the general agreement between the tone of this speech and the remark of Socrates which follows afterwards, 'I am a diviner, but a poor one.'

The tale of the grasshoppers is naturally suggested by the surrounding scene. They are also the representatives of the Athenians as children of the soil. Under the image of the lively chirruping grasshoppers who inform the Muses in heaven about those who honour them on earth, Plato intends to represent an Athenian audience (τεττίγεσσιν ἐοικότες). The story is introduced, apparently, to mark a change of subject, and also, like several other allusions which occur in the course of the Dialogue, in order to preserve the scene in the recollection of the reader.

No one can duly appreciate the dialogues of Plato, especially the Phaedrus, Symposium, and portions of the Republic, who has not a sympathy with mysticism. To the uninitiated, as he would himself have acknowledged, they will appear to be the dreams of a poet who is disguised as a philosopher. There is a twofold difficulty in apprehending this aspect of the Platonic writings. First, we do not immediately realize that under the marble exterior of Greek literature was concealed a soul thrilling with spiritual emotion. Secondly, the forms or figures which the Platonic philosophy assumes, are not like the images of the prophet Isaiah, or of the Apocalypse, familiar to us in the days of our youth. By mysticism we mean, not the extravagance of an erring fancy, but the concentration of reason in feeling, the enthusiastic love of the good, the true, the one, the sense of the infinity of knowledge and of the marvel of the human faculties. When feeding upon such thoughts the 'wing of the soul' is renewed and gains strength; she is raised above 'the manikins of earth' and their opinions, waiting in wonder to know, and working with reverence to find out what God in this or in another life may reveal to her.

On the decline of Greek Literature.

Phaedrus.

ONE of the main purposes of Plato in the Phaedrus is to satirize Rhetoric, or rather the Professors of Rhetoric who swarmed at Athens in the fourth century before Christ. As in the opening of the Dialogue he ridicules the interpreters of mythology; as in the Protagoras he mocks at the Sophists; as in the Euthydemus he makes fun of the word-splitting Eristics; as in the Cratylus he ridicules the fancies of Etymologers; as in the Meno and Gorgias and some other dialogues he makes reflections and casts sly imputations upon the higher classes at Athens; so in the Phaedrus, chiefly in the latter part, he aims his shafts at the rhetoricians. The profession of rhetoric was the greatest and most popular in Athens, necessary 'to a man's salvation,' or at any rate to his attainment of wealth or power; but Plato finds nothing wholesome or genuine in the purpose of it. It is a veritable 'sham,' having no relation to fact, or to truth of any kind. It is antipathetic to him not only as a philosopher, but also as a great writer. He cannot abide the tricks of the rhetoricians, or the pedantries and mannerisms which they introduce into speech and writing. He sees clearly how far removed they are from the ways of simplicity and truth, and how ignorant of the very elements of the art which they are professing to teach. The thing which is most necessary of all, the knowledge of human nature, is hardly if at all considered by them. The true rules of composition, which are very few, are not to be found in their voluminous systems. Their pretentiousness, their omniscience, their large fortunes, their impatience of argument, their indifference to first principles, their stupidity, their progresses through Hellas accompanied by a troop of their disciples — these things were very distasteful to Plato, who esteemed genius far above art, and was quite sensible of the interval which separated them (Phaedr. 269 D). It is the interval which separates

Sophists and rhetoricians from ancient famous men and women such as Homer and Hesiod, Anacreon and Sappho, Æschylus and Sophocles; and the Platonic Socrates is afraid that, if he approves the former, he will be disowned by the latter (235 B). The spirit of rhetoric was soon to overspread all Hellas; and Plato with prophetic insight may have seen, from afar, the great literary waste or dead level, or interminable marsh, in which Greek literature was soon to disappear. A similar vision of the decline of the Greek drama and of the contrast of the old literature and the new was present to the mind of Aristophanes after the death of the three great tragedians (Frogs, l. 93 ff.). After about a hundred, or at most two hundred years if we exclude Homer, the genius of Hellas had ceased to flower or blossom. The dreary waste which follows, beginning with the Alexandrian writers and even before them in the platitudes of Isocrates and his school, spreads over much more than a thousand years. And from this decline the Greek language and literature, unlike the Latin, which has come to life in new forms and been developed into the great European languages, never recovered. *Phaedrus.*

This monotony of literature, without merit, without genius and without character, is a phenomenon which deserves more attention than it has hitherto received; it is a phenomenon unique in the literary history of the world. How could there have been so much cultivation, so much diligence in writing, and so little mind or real creative power? Why did a thousand years invent nothing better than Sibylline books, Orphic poems, Byzantine imitations of classical histories, Christian reproductions of Greek plays, novels like the silly and obscene romances of Longus and Heliodorus, innumerable forged epistles, a great many epigrams, biographies of the meanest and most meagre description, a sham philosophy which was the bastard progeny of the union between Hellas and the East? Only in Plutarch, in Lucian, in Longinus, in the Roman emperors Marcus Aurelius and Julian, in some of the Christian fathers, are there any traces of good sense or originality, or any power of arousing the interest of later ages. And when new books ceased to be written, why did hosts of grammarians and interpreters flock in, who never attain to any sound notion either of grammar or interpretation? Why did the physical sciences

Phaedrus.

never arrive at any true knowledge or make any real progress? Why did poetry droop and languish? Why did history degenerate into fable? Why did words lose their power of expression? Why were ages of external greatness and magnificence attended by all the signs of decay in the human mind which are possible?

To these questions many answers may be given, which if not the true causes, are at least to be reckoned among the symptoms of the decline. There is the want of method in physical science, the want of criticism in history, the want of simplicity or delicacy in poetry, the want of political freedom, which is the true atmosphere of public speaking, in oratory. The ways of life were luxurious and commonplace. Philosophy had become extravagant, eclectic, abstract, devoid of any real content. At length it ceased to exist. It had spread words like plaster over the whole field of knowledge. It had grown ascetic on one side, mystical on the other. Neither of these tendencies was favourable to literature. There was no sense of beauty either in language or in art. The Greek world became vacant, barbaric, oriental. No one had anything new to say, or any conviction of truth. The age had no remembrance of the past, no power of understanding what other ages thought and felt. The Catholic faith had degenerated into dogma and controversy. For more than a thousand years not a single writer of first-rate, or even of second-rate, reputation has a place in the innumerable rolls of Greek literature.

If we seek to go deeper, we can still only describe the outward nature of the clouds or darkness which were spread over the heavens during so many ages without relief or light. We may say that this, like several other long periods in the history of the human race, was destitute, or deprived of the moral qualities which are the root of literary excellence. It had no life or aspiration, no national or political force, no desire for consistency, no love of knowledge for its own sake. It did not attempt to pierce the mists which surrounded it. It did not propose to itself to go forward and scale the heights of knowledge, but to go backwards and seek at the beginning what can only be found towards the end. It was lost in doubt and ignorance. It rested upon tradition and authority. It had none of the higher play of fancy which creates poetry; and where there is no true poetry,

neither can there be any good prose. It had no great characters, and therefore it had no great writers. It was incapable of distinguishing between words and things. It was so hopelessly below the ancient standard of classical Greek art and literature that it had no power of understanding or of valuing them. It is doubtful whether any Greek author was justly appreciated in antiquity except by his own contemporaries; and this neglect of the great classical authors of the past led to the disappearance of the larger part of them, while the Greek fathers were mostly preserved. There is no reason to suppose that, in the century before the taking of Constantinople, much more was in existence than the scholars of the Renaissance carried away with them to Italy. *Phaedrus.*

The character of Greek literature sank lower as time went on. It consisted more and more of compilations, of scholia, of extracts, of commentaries, forgeries, imitations. The commentator or interpreter had no conception of his author as a whole, and very little of the context of any passage which he was explaining. The least things were preferred by him to the greatest. The question of a reading, or a grammatical form, or an accent, or the uses of a word, took the place of the aim or subject of the book. He had no sense of the beauties of an author, and very little light is thrown by him on real difficulties. He interprets past ages by his own. The greatest classical writers are the least appreciated by him. This seems to be the reason why so many of them have perished, why great historians like Philistus hardly exist even in fragments, why the lyric poets have almost wholly disappeared; why, out of the eighty or ninety tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles, only seven of each have been preserved.

Such an age of sciolism and scholasticism may possibly once more get the better of the literary world. There are those who prophesy that the signs of such a day are again appearing among us, and that at the end of the present century no writer of the first class will be still alive. They think that the Muse of Literature may transfer herself to other countries less dried up or worn out than our own. They seem to see the withering effect of criticism on original genius. No one can doubt that such a decay or decline of literature and of art seriously affects the manners and character of a nation. It takes away half the joys and refinements of life; it increases its dulness and grossness.

Phaedrus. Hence it becomes a matter of great interest to consider how, if at all, such a degeneracy may be averted. Is there any elixir which can restore life and youth to the literature of a nation, or at any rate which can prevent it becoming unmanned and enfeebled?

First there is the progress of education. It is possible, and even probable, that the extension of the means of knowledge over a wider area and to persons living under new conditions may lead to many new combinations of thought and language. But, as yet, experience does not favour the realization of such a hope or promise. It may be truly answered that at present the training of teachers and the methods of education are very imperfect, and therefore that we cannot judge of the future by the present. When more of our youth are trained in the best literatures, and in the best parts of them, their minds may be expected to have a larger growth. They will have more interests, more thoughts, more material for conversation; they will have a higher standard and begin to think for themselves. The number of persons who will have the opportunity of receiving the highest education through the cheap press, and by the help of high schools and colleges, may increase tenfold. It is likely that in every thousand persons there is at least one who is far above the average in natural capacity, but the seed which is in him dies for want of cultivation. It has never had any stimulus to grow, or any field in which to blossom and produce fruit. Here is a great reservoir or treasure-house of human intelligence out of which new waters may flow and cover the earth. If at any time the great men of the world should die out, and originality or genius appear to suffer a partial eclipse, there is a boundless hope in the multitude of intelligences for future generations. They may bring gifts to men such as the world has never received before. They may begin at a higher point and yet take with them all the result of the past. The co-operation of many may have effects no less striking, though different in character from those which the creative genius of a single man, such as Bacon or Newton, formerly produced. There is also great hope to be derived, not merely from the extension of education over a wider area, but from the continuance of it during many generations. Educated parents will have children fit to receive education; and these again will

grow up under circumstances far more favourable to the growth of intelligence than any which have hitherto existed in our own or in former ages. *Phaedrus.*

Even if we were to suppose no more men of genius to be produced, the great writers of ancient or of modern times will remain to furnish abundant materials of education to the coming generation. Now that every nation holds communication with every other, we may truly say in a fuller sense than formerly that 'the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.' They will not be 'cribbed, cabined, and confined' within a province or an island. The East will provide elements of culture to the West as well as the West to the East. The religions and literatures of the world will be open books, which he who wills may read. The human race may not be always ground down by bodily toil, but may have greater leisure for the improvement of the mind. The increasing sense of the greatness and infinity of nature will tend to awaken in men larger and more liberal thoughts. The love of mankind may be the source of a greater development of literature than nationality has ever been. There may be a greater freedom from prejudice and party; we may better understand the whereabouts of truth, and therefore there may be more success and fewer failures in the search for it. Lastly, in the coming ages we shall carry with us the recollection of the past, in which are necessarily contained many seeds of revival and renaissance in the future. So far is the world from becoming exhausted, so groundless is the fear that literature will ever die out.

PHAEDRUS.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES. PHAEDRUS.

SCENE: — Under a plane-tree, by the banks of the Ilissus.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedrus, who has just left Lysias the orator, is about to take a walk in the country, when he meets Socrates.

Socrates. My dear Phaedrus, whence come you, and whither are you going?

Phaedrus. I have come from Lysias the son of Cephalus, and I am going to take a walk outside the wall, for I have been sitting with him the whole morning; and our common friend Acumenus tells me that it is much more refreshing to walk in the open air than to be shut up in a cloister.

Soc. There he is right. Lysias then, I suppose, was in the town?

Phaedr. Yes, he was staying with Epicrates, here at the house of Morychus; that house which is near the temple of Olympian Zeus.

Soc. And how did he entertain you? Can I be wrong in supposing that Lysias gave you a feast of discourse?

Phaedr. You shall hear, if you can spare time to accompany me.

Soc. And should I not deem the conversation of you and Lysias 'a thing of higher import,' as I may say in the words of Pindar, 'than any business'?

Phaedr. Will you go on?

Soc. And will you go on with the narration?

The theme of Lysias was a paradox about love.

Phaedr. My tale, Socrates, is one of your sort, for love was the theme which occupied us — love after a fashion: Lysias has been writing about a fair youth who was being tempted, but not by a lover; and this was the point: he

Phaedrus. ingeniously proved that the non-lover should be accepted rather than the lover.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Soc.* O that is noble of him! I wish that he would say the poor man rather than the rich, and the old man rather than the young one;—then he would meet the case of me and of many a man; his words would be quite refreshing, and he would be a public benefactor. For my part, I do so long to hear his speech, that if you walk all the way to Megara, and when you have reached the wall come back, as Herodicus recommends, without going in, I will keep you company.

Phaedr. What do you mean, my good Socrates? How can you imagine that my unpractised memory can do justice to an elaborate work, which the greatest rhetorician of the age spent a long time in composing. Indeed, I cannot; I would give a great deal if I could.

The ways of Phaedrus are well known to Socrates, *Soc.* I believe that I know Phaedrus about as well as I know myself, and I am very sure that the speech of Lysias was repeated to him, not once only, but again and again;—he insisted on hearing it many times over and Lysias was very willing to gratify him; at last, when nothing else would do, he got hold of the book, and looked at what he most wanted to see,—this occupied him during the whole morning;—and then when he was tired with sitting, he went out to take a walk, not until, by the dog, as I believe, he had simply learned by heart the entire discourse, unless it was unusually long, and he went to a place outside the wall that he might practise his lesson. There he saw a certain lover of discourse who had a similar weakness;—he saw and rejoiced; now thought he, 'I shall have a partner in my revels.' And he invited him to come and walk with him. But when the lover of discourse begged that he would repeat the tale, he gave himself airs and said, 'No I cannot,' as if he were indisposed; although, if the hearer had refused, he would sooner or later have been compelled by him to listen whether he would or no. Therefore, Phaedrus, bid him do at once what he will soon do whether bidden or not.

Phaedr. I see that you will not let me off until I speak in some fashion or other; verily therefore my best plan is to speak as I best can.

Soc. A very true remark, that of yours.

Phaedr. I will do as I say; but believe me, Socrates, I did not learn the very words — O no; nevertheless I have a general notion of what he said, and will give you a summary of the points in which the lover differed from the non-lover. Let me begin at the beginning. *Phaedrus.* SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Soc. Yes, my sweet one; but you must first of all show what you have in your left hand under your cloak, for that roll, as I suspect, is the actual discourse. Now, much as I love you, I would not have you suppose that I am going to have your memory exercised at my expense, if you have Lysias himself here. who observes that he has got the roll hidden under his cloak.

Phaedr. Enough; I see that I have no hope of practising my art upon you. But if I am to read, where would you please to sit?

Soc. Let us turn aside and go by the Ilissus; we will sit down at some quiet spot.

Phaedr. I am fortunate in not having my sandals, and as you never have any, I think that we may go along the brook and cool our feet in the water; this will be the easiest way, and at midday and in the summer is far from being unpleasant.

Soc. Lead on, and look out for a place in which we can sit down.

Phaedr. Do you see that tallest plane-tree in the distance?

Soc. Yes.

Phaedr. There are shade and gentle breezes, and grass on which we may either sit or lie down.

Soc. Move forward.

Phaedr. I should like to know, Socrates, whether the place is not somewhere here at which Boreas is said to have carried off Orithyia from the banks of the Ilissus? On the way to the Ilissus Phaedrus asks the opinion of Socrates respecting the truth of a local legend.

Soc. Such is the tradition.

Phaedr. And is this the exact spot? The little stream is delightfully clear and bright; I can fancy that there might be maidens playing near.

Soc. I believe that the spot is not exactly here, but about a quarter of a mile lower down, where you cross to the temple of Artemis, and there is, I think, some sort of an altar of Boreas at the place.

Phaedr. I have never noticed it; but I beseech you to tell me, Socrates, do you believe this tale?

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Socrates desires to know himself before he enquires into the newly found philosophy of mythology.

Soc. The wise are doubtful, and I should not be singular if, like them, I too doubted. I might have a rational explanation that Orithyia was playing with Pharmacia, when a northern gust carried her over the neighbouring rocks; and this being the manner of her death, she was said to have been carried away by Boreas. There is a discrepancy, however, about the locality; according to another version of the story she was taken from the Areopagus, and not from this place. Now I quite acknowledge that these allegories are very nice, but he is not to be envied who has to invent them; much labour and ingenuity will be required of him; and when he has once begun, he must go on and rehabilitate Hippocentaurs and chimeras dire. Gorgons and winged steeds flow in apace, and numberless other inconceivable and portentous natures. And if he is sceptical about them, and would fain reduce them one after another to the rules of probability, this sort of crude philosophy will take up a great deal of time. Now I have no leisure for such enquiries; shall I tell you why? I must first know myself, as the Delphian inscription says; to be curious about that which is not my concern, while I am still in ignorance of my own self, would be ridiculous. And therefore I bid farewell to all this; the common opinion is enough for me. For, as I was saying, I want to know not about this, but about myself: am I a monster more complicated and swollen with passion than the serpent Typho, or a creature of a gentler and simpler sort, to whom Nature has given a diviner and lowlier destiny? But let me ask you, friend: have we not reached the plane-tree to which you were conducting us?

Phaedr. Yes, this is the tree.

Socrates, who is an inhabitant of the city, is charmed with the sights and sounds of the country which are so new to him.

Soc. By Herè, a fair resting-place, full of summer sounds and scents. Here is this lofty and spreading plane-tree, and the agnus castus high and clustering, in the fullest blossom and the greatest fragrance; and the stream which flows beneath the plane-tree is deliciously cold to the feet. Judging from the ornaments and images, this must be a spot sacred to Achelous and the Nymphs. How delightful is the breeze:—so very sweet; and there is a sound in the air shrill and summerlike which makes answer to the chorus of the cicadae. But the greatest charm of all is the grass, like

a pillow gently sloping to the head. My dear Phaedrus, you have been an admirable guide. *Phaedrus.*

Phaedr. What an incomprehensible being you are, Socrates: when you are in the country, as you say, you really are like some stranger who is led about by a guide. Do you ever cross the border? I rather think that you never venture even outside the gates. SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Soc. Very true, my good friend; and I hope that you will excuse me when you hear the reason, which is, that I am a lover of knowledge, and the men who dwell in the city are my teachers, and not the trees or the country. Though I do indeed believe that you have found a spell with which to draw me out of the city into the country, like a hungry cow before whom a bough or a bunch of fruit is waved. For only hold up before me in like manner a book, and you may lead me all round Attica, and over the wide world. And now having arrived, I intend to lie down, and do you choose any posture in which you can read best. Begin. He is a lover of knowledge and of mankind, and therefore can only be drawn out of the city by the help of a book.

Phaedr. Listen. You know how matters stand with me; and how, as I conceive, this affair may be arranged for the advantage of both of us. And I maintain that I ought not to fail in my suit, because I am not your lover: for lovers repent of the kindnesses which they have shown when their passion ceases, but to the non-lovers who are free and not under any compulsion, no time of repentance ever comes; for they confer their benefits according to the measure of their ability, in the way which is most conducive to their own interest. Then again, lovers consider how by reason of their love they have neglected their own concerns and rendered service to others: and when to these benefits conferred they add on the troubles which they have endured, they think that they have long ago made to the beloved a very ample return. But the non-lover has no such tormenting recollections; he has never neglected his affairs or quarrelled with his relations; he has no troubles to add up or excuses to invent; and being well rid of all these evils, why should he not freely do what will gratify the beloved? If you say that the lover is more to be esteemed, because his love is thought to be greater; for he is willing to say and do what is hateful to other men, in order to please his beloved; The non-lover should be preferred to the lover, because he is more his own master, less exacting, more likely to keep another's secrets, less fickle, less suspected, less jealous, less exclusive;

Phaedrus. — that, if true, is only a proof that he will prefer any future love to his present, and will injure his old love at the pleasure of the new. And how, in a matter of such infinite importance, can a man be right in trusting himself to one who is afflicted with a malady which no experienced person would attempt to cure, for the patient himself admits that he is not in his right mind, and acknowledges that he is wrong in his mind, but says that he is unable to control himself? And if he came to his right mind, would he ever imagine that the desires were good which he conceived when in his wrong mind? Once more, there are many more non-lovers than lovers; and if you choose the best of the lovers, you will not have many to choose from; but if from the non-lovers, the choice will be larger, and you will be far more likely to find among them a person who is worthy of your friendship. If public opinion be your dread, and you would avoid reproach, in all probability the lover, who is always thinking that other men are as emulous of him as he is of them, will boast to some one[1] of his successes, and make a show of them openly in the pride of his heart; — he wants others to know that his labour has not been lost; but the non-lover is more his own master, and is desirous of solid good, and not of the opinion of mankind. Again, the lover may be generally noted or seen following the beloved (this is his regular occupation), and whenever they are observed to exchange two words they are supposed to meet about some affair of love either past or in contemplation; but when non-lovers meet, no one asks the reason why, because people know that talking to another is natural, whether friendship or mere pleasure be the motive. Once more, if you fear the fickleness of friendship, consider that in any other case a quarrel might be a mutual calamity; but now, when you have given up what is most precious to you, you will be the greater loser, and therefore, you will have more reason in being afraid of the lover, for his vexations are many, and he is always fancying that every one is leagued against him. Wherefore also he debars his beloved from society; he will not have you intimate with the wealthy, lest they should

Lysias. and there are more non-lovers than lovers.

[1] Reading τῷ λέγειν; cf. infra, τῷ διαλέγεσθαι.

exceed him in wealth, or with men of education, lest they should be his superiors in understanding; and he is equally afraid of anybody's influence who has any other advantage over himself. If he can persuade you to break with them, you are left without a friend in the world; or if, out of a regard to your own interest, you have more sense than to comply with his desire, you will have to quarrel with him. But those who are non-lovers, and whose success in love is the reward of their merit, will not be jealous of the companions of their beloved, and will rather hate those who refuse to be his associates, thinking that their favourite is slighted by the latter and benefited by the former; for more love than hatred may be expected to come to him out of his friendship with others. Many lovers too have loved the person of a youth before they knew his character or his belongings; so that when their passion has passed away, there is no knowing whether they will continue to be his
33 friends; whereas, in the case of non-lovers who were always friends, the friendship is not lessened by the favours granted; but the recollection of these remains with them, and is an earnest of good things to come. Further, I say that you are likely to be improved by me, whereas the lover will spoil you. For they praise your words and actions in a wrong way; partly, because they are afraid of offending you, and also, their judgment is weakened by passion. Such are the feats which love exhibits; he makes things painful to the disappointed which give no pain to others; he compels the successful lover to praise what ought not to give him pleasure, and therefore the beloved is to be pitied rather than envied. But if you listen to me, in the first place, I, in my intercourse with you, shall not merely regard present enjoyment, but also future advantage, being not mastered by love, but my own master; nor for small causes taking violent dislikes, but even when the cause is great, slowly laying up little wrath — unintentional offences I shall forgive, and intentional ones I shall try to prevent; and these are the marks of a friendship which will last. Do you think that a lover only can be a firm friend? reflect:—if this were true, we should set small value on sons, or fathers, or mothers; nor should we ever have loyal friends, for our

Phaedrus. LYSIAS.

The non-lover will improve, the lover will spoil, the object of his affections.

The non-lover is the firmer friend; he is less of a beggar and

Phaedrus.

LYSIAS, SOCRATES.

more of a giver; his love is more lasting and is never censured.

love of them arises not from passion, but from other associations. Further, if we ought to shower favours on those who are the most eager suitors,— on that principle, we ought always to do good, not to the most virtuous, but to the most needy; for they are the persons who will be most relieved, and will therefore be the most grateful; and when you make a feast you should invite not your friend, but the beggar and the empty soul; for they will love you, and attend you, and come about your doors, and will be the best pleased, and the most grateful, and will invoke many a blessing on your head. Yet surely you ought not to be granting favours to those who besiege you with prayer, but to those who are best able to reward you; nor to the lover only, but to those who are worthy of love; nor to those who will enjoy the bloom of your youth, but to those who will share their possessions with you in age; nor to those who, having succeeded, will glory in their success to others, but to those who will be modest and tell no tales; nor to those who care about you for a moment only, but to those who will continue your friends through life; nor to those who, when their passion is over, will pick a quarrel with you, but rather to those who, when the charm of youth has left you, will show their own virtue. Remember what I have said; and consider yet this further point: friends admonish the lover under the idea that his way of life is bad, but no one of his kindred ever yet censured the non-lover, or thought that he was ill-advised about his own interests.

'Perhaps you will ask me whether I propose that you should indulge every non-lover. To which I reply that not even the lover would advise you to indulge all lovers, for the indiscriminate favour is less esteemed by the rational recipient, and less easily hidden by him who would escape the censure of the world. Now love ought to be for the advantage of both parties, and for the injury of neither.

'I believe that I have said enough; but if there is anything more which you desire or which in your opinion needs to be supplied, ask and I will answer.'

Now, Socrates, what do you think? Is not the discourse excellent, more especially in the matter of the language?

Soc. Yes, quite admirable; the effect on me was ravishing.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

And this I owe to you, Phaedrus, for I observed you while reading to be in an ecstasy, and thinking that you are more experienced in these matters than I am, I followed your example, and, like you, my divine darling, I became inspired with a phrenzy.

Socrates has no great opinion of the speech. At first the effect on him was ravishing, but only because he saw that Phaedrus was ravished. Of the matter he will submit to Phaedrus's judgement; of the manner he does not think much.

Phaedr. Indeed, you are pleased to be merry.

Soc. Do you mean that I am not in earnest?

Phaedr. Now don't talk in that way, Socrates, but let me have your real opinion; I adjure you, by Zeus, the god of friendship, to tell me whether you think that any Hellene could have said more or spoken better on the same subject.

Soc. Well, but are you and I expected to praise the sentiments of the author, or only the clearness, and roundness, and finish, and tournure of the language? As to the first I willingly submit to your better judgment, for I am not worthy to form an opinion, having only attended to the rhetorical manner; and I was doubting whether this could have been defended even by Lysias himself; I thought, though I speak under correction, that he repeated himself two or three times, either from want of words or from want of pains; and also, he appeared to me ostentatiously to exult in showing how well he could say the same thing [1] in two or three ways.

Phaedr. Nonsense, Socrates; what you call repetition was the especial merit of the speech; for he omitted no topic of which the subject rightly allowed, and I do not think that any one could have spoken better or more exhaustively.

Soc. There I cannot go along with you. Ancient sages, men and women, who have spoken and written of these things, would rise up in judgment against me, if out of complaisance I assented to you.

Phaedr. Who are they, and where did you hear anything better than this?

He has heard many a better speech, and thinks that he could make one

Soc. I am sure that I must have heard; but at this moment I do not remember from whom; perhaps from Sappho the fair, or Anacreon the wise; or, possibly, from a prose writer. Why do I say so? Why, because I perceive that my bosom is full, and that I could make another speech

[1] Reading *ταὐτά*.

Phaedrus. as good as that of Lysias, and different. Now I am certain that this is not an invention of my own, who am well aware that I know nothing, and therefore I can only infer that I have been filled through the ears, like a pitcher, from the waters of another, though I have actually forgotten in my stupidity who was my informant.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

himself, not entirely different, for this or any speech must have some good topics which are commonplaces.

Phaedr. That is grand:—but never mind where you heard the discourse or from whom; let that be a mystery not to be divulged even at my earnest desire. Only, as you say, promise [1] to make another and better oration, equal in length and entirely new, on the same subject; and I, like the nine Archons, will promise to set up a golden image at Delphi, not only of myself, but of you, and as large as life.

Soc. You are a dear golden ass if you suppose me to mean that Lysias has altogether missed the mark, and that I can make a speech from which all his arguments are to be excluded. The worst of authors will say something which is to the point. Who, for example, could speak on this thesis of yours without praising the discretion of the non-lover and blaming the indiscretion of the lover? These are the commonplaces of the subject which must come in (for what else is there to be said?) and must be allowed and excused; the only merit is in the arrangement of them, for there can be none in the invention; but when you leave the commonplaces, then there may be some originality.

One at least of Lysias' commonplaces is not to be excluded.

Phaedr. I admit that there is reason in what you say, and I too will be reasonable, and will allow you to start with the premiss that the lover is more disordered in his wits than the non-lover; if in what remains you make a longer and better speech than Lysias, and use other arguments, then I say again, that a statue you shall have of beaten gold, and take your place by the colossal offerings of the Cypselids at Olympia.

Soc. How profoundly in earnest is the lover, because to tease him I lay a finger upon his love! And so, Phaedrus, you really imagine that I am going to improve upon the ingenuity of Lysias?

Phaedr. There I have you as you had me, and you must

[1] Reading *ὑπόσχες εἰπεῖν.*

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Fair play. Phaedrus is determined to extort a speech from Socrates, as Socrates has already extorted the speech of Lysias from himself.

just speak 'as you best can.' Do not let us exchange 'tu quoque' as in a farce, or compel me to say to you as you said to me, 'I know Socrates as well as I know myself, and he was wanting to speak, but he gave himself airs.' Rather I would have you consider that from this place we stir not until you have unbosomed yourself of the speech; for here are we all alone, and I am stronger, remember, and younger than you:—'Wherefore perpend,' and do not compel me to use violence.

Soc. But, my sweet Phaedrus, how ridiculous it would be of me to compete with Lysias in an extempore speech! He is a master in his art and I am an untaught man.

Phaedr. You see how matters stand; and therefore let there be no more pretences; for, indeed, I know the word that is irresistible.

Soc. Then don't say it.

Phaedr. Yes, but I will; and my word shall be an oath. 'I say, or rather swear'—but what god will be the witness of my oath?—'By this plane-tree I swear, that unless you repeat the discourse here in the face of this very plane-tree, I will never tell you another; never let you have word of another!'

Soc. Villain! I am conquered; the poor lover of discourse has no more to say.

Phaedr. Then why are you still at your tricks?

Soc. I am not going to play tricks now that you have taken the oath, for I cannot allow myself to be starved.

Phaedr. Proceed.

37 *Soc.* Shall I tell you what I will do?

Phaedr. What?

Soc. I will veil my face and gallop through the discourse as fast as I can, for if I see you I shall feel ashamed and not know what to say.

Phaedr. Only go on and you may do anything else which you please.

Soc. Come, O ye Muses, melodious, as ye are called, whether you have received this name from the character of your strains, or because the Melians[1] are a musical race,

[1] In the original, *λίγειαι Λίγυες*.

Phaedrus. help, O help me in the tale which my good friend here desires me to rehearse, in order that his friend whom he always deemed wise may seem to him to be wiser now than ever.

SOCRATES.

Before we can determine whether the non-lover or lover is to be preferred we must enquire into the nature of love.

Once upon a time there was a fair boy, or, more properly speaking, a youth; he was very fair and had a great many lovers; and there was one special cunning one, who had persuaded the youth that he did not love him, but he really loved him all the same; and one day when he was paying his addresses to him, he used this very argument — that he ought to accept the non-lover rather than the lover; his words were as follows:—

'All good counsel begins in the same way; a man should know what he is advising about, or his counsel will come to nought. But people imagine that they know about the nature of things, when they don't know about them, and, not having come to an understanding at first because they think that they know, they end, as might be expected, in contradicting one another and themselves. Now you and I must not be guilty of this fundamental error which we condemn in others; but as our question is whether the lover or non-lover is to be preferred, let us first of all agree in defining the nature and power of love, and then, keeping our eyes upon the definition and to this appealing, let us further enquire whether love brings advantage or disadvantage.

'Every one sees that love is a desire, and we know also that non-lovers desire the beautiful and good. Now in what way is the lover to be distinguished from the non-lover? Let us note that in every one of us there are two guiding and ruling principles which lead us whither they will; one is the natural desire of pleasure, the other is an acquired opinion which aspires after the best; and these two are sometimes in harmony and then again at war, and sometimes the one, sometimes the other conquers. When opinion by the help of reason leads us to the best, the conquering principle is called temperance; but when desire, which is devoid of reason, rules in us and drags us to pleasure, that power of misrule is called excess. Now excess has many names, and many members, and many forms, and any of

There are two principles in man, rational desire and irrational: the latter is the power of love.

these forms when very marked gives a name, neither honourable nor creditable, to the bearer of the name. The desire of eating, for example, which gets the better of the higher reason and the other desires, is called gluttony, and he who is possessed by it is called a glutton; the tyrannical desire of drink, which inclines the possessor of the desire to drink, has a name which is only too obvious, and there can be as little doubt by what name any other appetite of the same family would be called;— it will be the appropriate name of that desire which from time to time predominates. And now I think that you will perceive the drift of my discourse; but as every spoken word is in a manner plainer than the unspoken, I had better say further that the irrational desire which overcomes the tendency of opinion towards right, and is led away to the enjoyment of beauty, and especially of personal beauty, by the desires which are her own kindred — that supreme desire, I say, which by leading[1] conquers and by the force of passion is reinforced, from this very force, receiving a name, is called love (ἐρρωμένως ἔρως).'

Socrates attributes to inspiration the flow of words which is so unusual with him.

And now, dear Phaedrus, I shall pause for an instant to ask whether you do not think me, as I appear to myself, inspired?

Phaedr. Yes, Socrates, you seem to have a very unusual flow of words.

Soc. Listen to me, then, in silence; for surely the place is holy; so that you must not wonder, if, as I proceed, I appear to be in a divine fury, for already I am getting into dithyrambics.

Phaedr. Nothing can be truer.

Soc. The responsibility rests with you. But hear what follows, and perhaps the fit may be averted; all is in their hands above. I will go on talking to my youth. Listen:—

Thus, my friend, we have declared and defined the nature of the subject. Keeping the definition in view, let us now enquire what advantage or disadvantage is likely to ensue from the lover or the non-lover to him who accepts their advances.

He who is the victim of his passions and the slave of pleasure will of course desire to make his beloved as agreeable to himself as possible. Now to him who has a mind diseased

[1] Reading ἀγωγῇ.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES.

The lover desires to secure the inferiority and subserviency of the beloved.

anything is agreeable which is not opposed to him, but that which is equal or superior is hateful to him, and therefore the lover will not brook any superiority or equality on the part of his beloved; he is always employed in reducing him to inferiority. And the ignorant is the inferior of the wise, the coward of the brave, the slow of speech of the speaker, the dull of the clever. These, and not these only, are the mental defects of the beloved;—defects which, when implanted by nature, are necessarily a delight to the lover, and, when not implanted, he must contrive to implant them in him, if he would not be deprived of his fleeting joy.

He will banish from him society and philosophy.

And therefore he cannot help being jealous, and will debar his beloved from the advantages of society which would make a man of him, and especially from that society which would have given him wisdom, and thereby he cannot fail to do him great harm. That is to say, in his excessive fear lest he should come to be despised in his eyes he will be compelled to banish from him divine philosophy; and there is no greater injury which he can inflict upon him than this. He will contrive that his beloved shall be wholly ignorant, and in everything shall look to him; he is to be the delight of the lover's heart, and a curse to himself. Verily, a lover is a profitable guardian and associate for him in all that relates to his mind.

He will choose an effeminate person for his beloved, and train him to be more effeminate.

Let us next see how his master, whose law of life is pleasure and not good, will keep and train the body of his servant. Will he not choose a beloved who is delicate rather than sturdy and strong? One brought up in shady bowers and not in the bright sun, a stranger to manly exercises and the sweat of toil, accustomed only to a soft and luxurious diet, instead of the hues of health having the colours of paint and ornament, and the rest of a piece?—such a life as any one can imagine and which I need not detail at length. But I may sum up all that I have to say in a word, and pass on. Such a person in war, or in any of the great crises of life, will be the anxiety of his friends and also of his lover, and certainly not the terror of his enemies; which nobody can deny.

And now let us tell what advantage or disadvantage the beloved will receive from the guardianship and society of

his lover in the matter of his property; this is the next point to be considered. The lover will be the first to see what, indeed, will be sufficiently evident to all men, that he desires above all things to deprive his beloved of his dearest and best and holiest possessions, father, mother, kindred, friends, of all whom he thinks may be hinderers or reprovers of their most sweet converse; he will even cast a jealous eye upon his gold and silver or other property, because these make him a less easy prey, and when caught less manageable; hence he is of necessity displeased at his possession of them and rejoices at their loss; and he would like him to be wifeless, childless, homeless, as well; and the longer the better, for the longer he is all this, the longer he will enjoy him.

Phaedrus. SOCRATES.

He will deprive him of friends, parents, kinsmen, and of every other good.

There are some sort of animals, such as flatterers, who are dangerous and mischievous enough, and yet nature has mingled a temporary pleasure and grace in their composition. You may say that a courtesan is hurtful, and disapprove of such creatures and their practices, and yet for the time they are very pleasant. But the lover is not only hurtful to his love; he is also an extremely disagreeable companion. The old proverb says that 'birds of a feather flock together'; I suppose that equality of years inclines them to the same pleasures, and similarity begets friendship; yet you may have more than enough even of this; and verily constraint is always said to be grievous. Now the lover is not only unlike his beloved, but he forces himself upon him. For he is old and his love is young, and neither day nor night will he leave him if he can help; necessity and the sting of desire drive him on, and allure him with the pleasure which he receives from seeing, hearing, touching, perceiving him in every way. And therefore he is delighted to fasten upon him and to minister to him. But what pleasure or consolation can the beloved be receiving all this time? Must he not feel the extremity of disgust when he looks at an old shrivelled face and the remainder to match, which even in a description is disagreeable, and quite detestable when he is forced into daily contact with his lover; moreover he is jealously watched and guarded against everything and everybody, and has to hear misplaced

The flatterer and the courtesan may be pleasant, although pernicious, but the old withered lover must always be detestable to the object of his affections.

Phaedrus. and exaggerated praises of himself, and censures equally
SOCRATES. inappropriate, which are intolerable when the man is sober, and, besides being intolerable, are published all over the world in all their indelicacy and wearisomeness when he is drunk.

The lover, having effected the ruin of his beloved in body and mind, runs away without paying.

And not only while his love continues is he mischievous and unpleasant, but when his love ceases he becomes a perfidious enemy of him on whom he showered his oaths 24
and prayers and promises, and yet could hardly prevail upon him to tolerate the tedium of his company even from motives of interest. The hour of payment arrives, and now he is the servant of another master; instead of love and infatuation, wisdom and temperance are his bosom's lords; but the beloved has not discovered the change which has taken place in him, when he asks for a return and recalls to his recollection former sayings and doings; he believes himself to be speaking to the same person, and the other, not having the courage to confess the truth, and not knowing how to fulfil the oaths and promises which he made when under the dominion of folly, and having now grown wise and temperate, does not want to do as he did or to be as he was before. And so he runs away and is constrained to be a defaulter; the oyster-shell [1] has fallen with the other side uppermost — he changes pursuit into flight, while the other is compelled to follow him with passion and imprecation, not knowing that he ought never from the first to have accepted a demented lover instead of a sensible non-lover; and that in making such a choice he was giving himself up to a faithless, morose, envious, disagreeable being, hurtful to his estate, hurtful to his bodily health, and still more hurtful to the cultivation of his mind, than which there neither is nor ever will be anything more honoured in the eyes both of gods and men. Consider this, fair youth, and know that in the friendship of the lover there is no real kindness; he has an appetite and wants to feed upon you:

'As wolves love lambs so lovers love their loves.'

But I told you so, I am speaking in verse, and therefore I had better make an end; enough.

[1] In allusion to a game in which two parties fled or pursued according as an oyster-shell which was thrown into the air fell with the dark or light side uppermost.

Phaedr. I thought that you were only half-way and were going to make a similar speech about all the advantages of accepting the non-lover. Why do you not proceed?

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Soc. Does not your simplicity observe that I have got out of dithyrambics into heroics, when only uttering a censure on the lover? And if I am to add the praises of the non-lover what will become of me? Do you not perceive that I am already overtaken by the Nymphs to whom you have mischievously exposed me? And therefore I will only add that the non-lover has all the advantages in which the lover is accused of being deficient. And now I will say no more; there has been enough of both of them. Leaving
242 the tale to its fate, I will cross the river and make the best of my way home, lest a worse thing be inflicted upon me by you.

Enough:— What is said in dispraise of the lover may be converted into praise of the non-lover.

Phaedr. Not yet, Socrates; not until the heat of the day has passed; do you not see that the hour is almost noon? there is the midday sun standing still, as people say, in the meridian. Let us rather stay and talk over what has been said, and then return in the cool.

Soc. Your love of discourse, Phaedrus, is superhuman, simply marvellous, and I do not believe that there is any one of your contemporaries who has either made or in one way or another has compelled others to make an equal number of speeches. I would except Simmias the Theban, but all the rest are far behind you. And now I do verily believe that you have been the cause of another.

Phaedr. That is good news. But what do you mean?

Soc. I mean to say that as I was about to cross the stream the usual sign was given to me,— that sign which always forbids, but never bids, me to do anything which I am going to do; and I thought that I heard a voice saying in my ear that I had been guilty of impiety, and that I must not go away until I had made an atonement. Now I am a diviner, though not a very good one, but I have enough religion for my own use, as you might say of a bad writer — his writing is good enough for him; and I am beginning to see that I was in error. O my friend, how prophetic is the human soul! At the time I had a sort of misgiving, and, like Ibycus, 'I was troubled; I feared that I might be buying honour from

The divine sign forbids Socrates to depart; he is sensible that he has been guilty of impiety.

Phaedrus. men at the price of sinning against the gods.' Now I recognize my error.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Phaedr.* What error?

Soc. That was a dreadful speech which you brought with you, and you made me utter one as bad.

Phaedr. How so?

Soc. It was foolish, I say,—to a certain extent, impious; can anything be more dreadful?

Phaedr. Nothing, if the speech was really such as you describe.

Soc. Well, and is not Eros the son of Aphrodite, and a god?

Phaedr. So men say.

The two speeches were a blasphemy against the God of love. Socrates therefore before any evil happens to him will make a recantation.

Soc. But that was not acknowledged by Lysias in his speech, nor by you in that other speech which you by a charm drew from my lips. For if love be, as he surely is, a divinity, he cannot be evil. Yet this was the error of both the speeches. There was also a simplicity about them which was refreshing; having no truth or honesty in them, nevertheless they pretended to be something, hoping to succeed in deceiving the manikins of earth and gain celebrity among them. Wherefore I must have a purgation. And I bethink me of an ancient purgation of mythological error which was devised, not by Homer, for he never had the wit to discover why he was blind, but by Stesichorus, who was a philosopher and knew the reason why; and therefore, when he lost his eyes, for that was the penalty which was inflicted upon him for reviling the lovely Helen, he at once purged himself. And the purgation was a recantation, which began thus,—

> 'False is that word of mine—the truth is that thou didst not embark in ships, nor ever go to the walls of Troy;'

and when he had completed his poem, which is called 'the recantation,' immediately his sight returned to him. Now I will be wiser than either Stesichorus or Homer, in that I am going to make my recantation for reviling love before I suffer; and this I will attempt, not as before, veiled and ashamed, but with forehead bold and bare.

Phaedr. Nothing could be more agreeable to me than to hear you say so.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Soc. Only think, my good Phaedrus, what an utter want of delicacy was shown in the two discourses; I mean, in my own and in that which you recited out of the book. Would not any one who was himself of a noble and gentle nature, and who loved or ever had loved a nature like his own, when we tell of the petty causes of lovers' jealousies, and of their exceeding animosities, and of the injuries which they do to their beloved, have imagined that our ideas of love were taken from some haunt of sailors to which good manners were unknown — he would certainly never have admitted the justice of our censure?

The love which they described was of a very mean and ignoble sort.

Phaedr. I dare say not, Socrates.

Soc. Therefore, because I blush at the thought of this person, and also because I am afraid of Love himself, I desire to wash the brine out of my ears with water from the spring; and I would counsel Lysias not to delay, but to write another discourse, which shall prove that 'ceteris paribus' the lover ought to be accepted rather than the non-lover.

Phaedr. Be assured that he shall. You shall speak the praises of the lover, and Lysias shall be compelled by me to write another discourse on the same theme.

Soc. You will be true to your nature in that, and therefore I believe you.

Phaedr. Speak, and fear not.

Soc. But where is the fair youth whom I was addressing before, and who ought to listen now; lest, if he hear me not, he should accept a non-lover before he knows what he is doing?

Phaedr. He is close at hand, and always at your service.

The second discourse of Socrates:— the purport of this is to show that love is a madness of the noble sort.

Soc. Know then, fair youth, that the former discourse was
244 the word of Phaedrus, the son of Vain Man, who dwells in the city of Myrrhina (Myrrhinusius). And this which I am about to utter is the recantation of Stesichorus the son of Godly Man (Euphemus), who comes from the town of Desire (Himera), and is to the following effect: 'I told a lie when I said' that the beloved ought to accept the non-lover when he might have the lover, because the one is sane, and the other mad. It might be so if madness were simply an evil; but there is also a madness which is a

Phaedrus. divine gift, and the source of the chiefest blessings granted to men. For prophecy is a madness, and the prophetess at

SOCRATES. Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona when out of their senses have conferred great benefits on Hellas, both in public and private life, but when in their senses few or none. And I might also tell you how the Sibyl and other inspired persons have given to many an one many an intimation of the future which has saved them from falling. But it would be tedious to speak of what every one knows.

This madness is of four kinds:—

1. Prophecy is madness, as is proved by considerations of philology.

There will be more reason in appealing to the ancient inventors of names[1], who would never have connected prophecy (*μαντικὴ*), which foretells the future and is the noblest of arts, with madness (*μανικὴ*), or called them both by the same name, if they had deemed madness to be a disgrace or dishonour;—they must have thought that there was an inspired madness which was a noble thing; for the two words, *μαντικὴ* and *μανικὴ*, are really the same, and the letter *τ* is only a modern and tasteless insertion. And this is confirmed by the name which was given by them to the rational investigation of futurity, whether made by the help of birds or of other signs—this, for as much as it is an art which supplies from the reasoning faculty mind (*νοῦς*) and information (*ἱστορία*) to human thought (*οἴησις*), they originally termed *οἰονοιστικὴ*, but the word has been lately altered and made sonorous by the modern introduction of the letter Omega (*οἰονοιστικὴ* and *οἰωνιστικὴ*), and in proportion as prophecy (*μαντικὴ*) is more perfect and august than augury, both in name and fact, in the same proportion, as the ancients testify, is madness superior to a sane mind (*σωφροσύνη*), for the one is only of human, but the other of divine origin. Again, where plagues and mightiest woes have bred in certain families, owing to some ancient blood-guiltiness, there madness has entered with holy prayers and rites, and by inspired utterances found a way of deliverance for those who are in need; and he who has part in this gift, and is truly possessed and duly out of his mind, is by the use of purifications and mysteries made whole and exempt from evil, future as well as present, and has a release from the

2. The inspiration which purges away ancient wrath.

[1] Cp. Cratylus 388 foll.

calamity which was afflicting him. The third kind is the madness of those who are possessed by the Muses; which taking hold of a delicate and virgin soul, and there inspiring frenzy, awakens lyrical and all other numbers; with these adorning the myriad actions of ancient heroes for the instruction of posterity. But he who, having no touch of the Muses' madness in his soul, comes to the door and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art — he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted; the sane man disappears and is nowhere when he enters into rivalry with the madman.

Phaedrus. SOCRATES. 3. Poetry is madness.

I might tell of many other noble deeds which have sprung from inspired madness. And therefore, let no one frighten or flutter us by saying that the temperate friend is to be chosen rather than the inspired, but let him further show that love is not sent by the gods for any good to lover or beloved; if he can do so we will allow him to carry off the palm. And we, on our part, will prove in answer to him that the madness of love is the greatest of heaven's blessings, and the proof shall be one which the wise will receive, and the witling disbelieve. But first of all, let us view the affections and actions of the soul divine and human, and try to ascertain the truth about them. The beginning of our proof is as follows:—

4. Love is madness.

V

[1]The soul through all her being is immortal, for that which is ever in motion is immortal; but that which moves another and is moved by another, in ceasing to move ceases also to live. Only the self-moving, never leaving itself, never ceases to move, and is the fountain and beginning of motion to all that moves besides. Now, the beginning is unbegotten, for that which is begotten has a beginning; but the beginning is begotten of nothing, for if it were begotten of something, then the begotten would not come from a beginning. But if unbegotten, it must also be indestructible; for if beginning were destroyed, there could be no beginning out of anything, nor anything out of a beginning; and all things must have a beginning. And therefore the self-moving is the beginning of motion; and this can neither be destroyed nor

Soul is self-moving, and therefore immortal and unbegotten.

[1] Translated by Cicero (Tusc. Quaest. s. 24).

Phaedrus. begotten, else the whole heavens and all creation would
SOCRATES. collapse and stand still, and never again have motion or birth. But if the self-moving is proved to be immortal, he who affirms that self-motion is the very idea and essence of the soul will not be put to confusion. For the body which is moved from without is soulless; but that which is moved from within has a soul, such motion being inherent in the soul. But if this is true, must not the soul be the self-moving, and 2
therefore of necessity unbegotten and immortal? Enough of the soul's immortality.

The soul described under the image of two winged horses and a charioteer.

Of the nature of the soul, though her true form be ever a theme of large and more than mortal discourse, let me speak briefly, and in a figure. And let the figure be composite — a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. Now the winged horses and the charioteers of the gods are all of them noble and of noble descent, but those of other races are mixed; the human charioteer drives his in a pair; and one of them is noble and of noble breed, and the other is ignoble and of ignoble breed; and the driving of them of necessity gives a great deal of trouble to him. I will endeavour to explain to you in what way the mortal differs from the immortal creature. The soul in her totality has the care of inanimate being everywhere, and traverses the whole heaven in divers forms appearing; — when perfect and fully winged she soars upward, and orders the whole world; whereas the imperfect soul, losing her wings and drooping in her flight at last settles on the solid ground — there, finding a home, she receives an earthly frame which appears to be self-moved, but is really moved by her power; and this composition of soul and body is called a living and mortal creature. For immortal no such union can be reasonably believed to be; although fancy, not having seen nor surely known the nature of God, may imagine an immortal creature having both a body and also a soul which are united throughout all time. Let that, however, be as God wills, and be spoken of acceptably to him. And now let us ask the reason why the soul loses her wings!

The wing is the element of earth which soars upward.

The wing is the corporeal element which is most akin to the divine, and which by nature tends to soar aloft and carry that which gravitates downwards into the upper

region, which is the habitation of the gods. The divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and the like; and by these the wing of the soul is nourished, and grows apace; but when fed upon evil and foulness and the opposite of good, wastes and falls away. Zeus, the mighty lord, holding the reins of a winged chariot, leads the way in heaven, ordering all and taking care of all; and there follows him the array of gods and demi-gods, marshalled in eleven bands; Hestia alone abides at home in the house of heaven; of the rest they who are reckoned among the princely twelve march in their appointed order. They see many blessed sights in the inner heaven, and there are many ways to and fro, along which the blessed gods are passing, every one doing his own work; he may follow who will and can, for jealousy has no place in the celestial choir. But when they go to banquet and festival, then they move up the steep to the top of the vault of heaven. The chariots of the gods in even poise, obeying the rein, glide rapidly; but the others labour, for the vicious steed goes heavily, weighing down the charioteer to the earth when his steed has not been thoroughly trained:—and this is the hour of agony and extremest conflict for the soul. For the immortals, when they are at the end of their course, go forth and stand upon the outside of heaven, and the revolution of the spheres carries them round, and they behold the things beyond. But of the heaven which is above the heavens, what earthly poet ever did or ever will sing worthily? It is such as I will describe; for I must dare to speak the truth, when truth is my theme. There abides the very being with which true knowledge is concerned; the colourless, formless, intangible essence, visible only to mind, who is the pilot of the soul. The divine intelligence, being nurtured upon mind and pure knowledge, and the intelligence of every soul which is capable of receiving the food proper to it, rejoices at beholding reality, and once more gazing upon truth, is replenished and made glad, until the revolution of the worlds brings her round again to the same place. In the revolution she beholds justice, and temperance, and knowledge absolute, not in the form of generation or of relation, which men call existence, but knowledge absolute in existence absolute; and

Phaedrus. SOCRATES.

The great festival of the Gods, which is celebrated in the outer heavens: mortals feebly follow.

The revolution of the worlds in which the soul beholds all truth.

Phaedrus. beholding the other true existences in like manner, and
SOCRATES. feasting upon them, she passes down into the interior of the heavens and returns home; and there the charioteer putting up his horses at the stall, gives them ambrosia to eat and nectar to drink.

Such is the life of the gods; but of other souls, that which follows God best and is likest to him lifts the head of the charioteer into the outer world, and is carried round in the revolution, troubled indeed by the steeds, and with difficulty beholding true being; while another only rises and falls, and sees, and again fails to see by reason of the unruliness of the steeds. The rest of the souls are also longing after the upper world and they all follow, but not being strong enough they are carried round below the surface, plunging, treading on one another, each striving to be first; and there is confusion and perspiration and the extremity of effort; and many of them are lamed or have their wings broken through the ill-driving of the charioteers; and all of them after a fruitless toil, not having attained to the mysteries of true being, go away, and feed upon opinion. The reason why the souls exhibit this exceeding eagerness to behold the plain of truth is that pasturage is found there, which is suited to the highest part of the soul; and the wing on which the soul soars is nourished with this. And there is a law of Destiny, that the soul which attains any vision of truth in company with a god is preserved from harm until the next period, and if attaining always is always unharmed. But when she is unable to follow, and fails to behold the truth, and through some ill-hap sinks beneath the double load of forgetfulness and vice, and her wings fall from her and she drops to the ground, then the law ordains that this soul shall at her first birth pass, not into any other animal, but only into man; and the soul which has seen most of truth shall come to the birth as a philosopher, or artist, or some musical and loving nature; that which has seen truth in the second degree shall be some righteous king or warrior chief; the soul which is of the third class shall be a politician, or economist, or trader; the fourth shall be a lover of gymnastic toils, or a physician; the fifth shall lead the life of a prophet or hierophant; to the sixth the

The trouble of other souls in the upper world.

They drop to earth and pass into men of different character according to their nature.

character of a poet or some other imitative artist will be assigned; to the seventh the life of an artisan or husbandman; to the eighth that of a sophist or demagogue; to the ninth that of a tyrant;—all these are states of probation, in which he who does righteously improves, and he who does unrighteously, deteriorates his lot.

The common soul can only grow wings in ten thousand years; the philosopher or philosopher-lover acquires them in three thousand.

Ten thousand years must elapse before the soul of each one can return to the place whence she came, for she cannot grow her wings in less; only the soul of a philosopher, guileless and true, or the soul of a lover, who is not devoid of philosophy, may acquire wings in the third of the recurring periods of a thousand years;—these, if they choose this higher life three times in succession, have wings given them, and go away at the end of three thousand years. But the other souls[1] receive judgment when they have completed their first life, and after the judgment they go, some of them to the houses of correction which are under the earth, and are punished; others to some place in heaven whither they are lightly borne by justice, and there they live in a manner worthy of the life which they led here when in the form of men. And at the end of the first thousand years the good souls and also the evil souls both come to draw lots and choose their second life, and they may take any which they please. The soul of a man may pass into the life of a beast, or from the beast return again into the man. But the soul which has never seen the truth will not pass into the human form. For a man must have intelligence of universals, and be able to proceed from the many particulars of sense to one conception of reason;—this is the recollection of those things which our soul once saw while following God, when, regardless of that which we now call being, she raised her head up towards the true being. And therefore the mind of the philosopher alone has wings; and this is just, for he is always, according to the measure of his abilities, clinging in recollection to those things in which God abides, and in which abiding He is Divine. And he who employs

The judgment.

The souls of those who have never seen general notions will never pass into men.

[1] The philosopher alone is not subject to judgment (*κρίσις*), for he has never lost the vision of truth.

Phaedrus. SOCRATES.

aright these memories is ever being initiated into perfect mysteries and alone becomes truly perfect. But, as he forgets earthly interests and is rapt in the divine, the vulgar deem him mad, and rebuke him; they do not see that he is inspired.

Thus far I have been speaking of the fourth and last kind of madness, which is imputed to him who, when he sees the beauty of earth, is transported with the recollection of the true beauty; he would like to fly away, but he cannot; he is like a bird fluttering and looking upward and careless of the world below; and he is therefore thought to be mad. And I have shown this of all inspirations to be the noblest and highest and the offspring of the highest to him who has or shares in it, and that he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it. For, as has been already said, every soul of man has in the way of nature beheld true being; this was the condition of her passing into the form of man. But all souls do not easily recall the things of the other world; they may have seen them for a short time only, or they may have been unfortunate in their earthly lot, and, having had their hearts turned to unrighteousness through some corrupting influence, they may have lost the memory of the holy things which once they saw. Few only retain an adequate remembrance of them; and they, when they behold here any image of that other world, are rapt in amazement; but they are ignorant of what this rapture means, because they do not clearly perceive. For there is no light of justice or temperance or any of the higher ideas which are precious to souls in the earthly copies of them: they are seen through a glass dimly; and there are few who, going to the images, behold in them the realities, and these only with difficulty. There was a time when with the rest of the happy band they saw beauty shining in brightness,— we philosophers following in the train of Zeus, others in company with other gods; and then we beheld the beatific vision and were initiated into a mystery which may be truly called most blessed, celebrated by us in our state of innocence, before we had any experience of evils to come, when we were admitted to the sight of apparitions innocent and simple and calm and happy, which we beheld shining in

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The true light is the recollection of the past.

pure light, pure ourselves and not yet enshrined in that living tomb which we carry about, now that we are imprisoned in the body, like an oyster in his shell. Let me linger over the memory of scenes which have passed away. *Phaedrus.* SOCRATES.

We find beauty here on earth, but of wisdom there is no visible image.

But of beauty, I repeat again that we saw her there shining in company with the celestial forms; and coming to earth we find her here too, shining in clearness through the clearest aperture of sense. For sight is the most piercing of our bodily senses; though not by that is wisdom seen; her loveliness would have been transporting if there had been a visible image of her, and the other ideas, if they had visible counterparts, would be equally lovely. But this is the privilege of beauty, that being the loveliest she is also the most palpable to sight. Now he who is not newly initiated or who has become corrupted, does not easily rise out of this world to the sight of true beauty in the other; he looks only at her earthly namesake, and instead of being awed at the sight of her, he is given over to pleasure, and like a brutish beast he rushes on to enjoy and beget; he consorts with wantonness, and is not afraid or ashamed of pursuing pleasure in violation of nature. But he whose initiation is recent, and who has been the spectator of many glories in the other world, is amazed when he sees any one having a god-like face or any bodily form which is the expression of divine beauty; and at first a shudder runs through him, and again the old awe steals over him; then looking upon the face of his beloved as of a god he reverences him, and if he were not afraid of being thought a downright madman, he would sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a god; then while he gazes on him there is a sort of reaction, and the shudder passes into an unusual heat and perspiration; for, as he receives the effluence of beauty through the eyes, the wing moistens and he warms. And as he warms, the parts out of which the wing grew, and which had been hitherto closed and rigid, and had prevented the wing from shooting forth, are melted, and as nourishment streams upon him, the lower end of the wing begins to swell and grow from the root upwards; and the growth extends under the whole soul — for once the whole was winged. During this process

The recollection of the true beauty quickly fades, but is renewed with a sort of ecstasy at the sight of the higher beauties of earth.

Phaedrus. the whole soul is in a state of ebullition and effervescence.

SOCRATES. And as in the cutting of teeth there is an irritation and tickling of the gums at the time of growing them, so when the soul begins to grow wings she bubbles up, and there is a feeling of uneasiness and tickling; and when the beauty of the beloved meets her eye, and she receives the sensible warm motion of particles which flow towards her, therefore called emotion (ἵμερος), and is refreshed and warmed by them, she ceases from her pain with joy. But when she is parted from her beloved and her moisture fails, then the orifices of the passage out of which the wing shoots dry up and close, and intercept the germ of the wing; which, being shut up with the emotion, throbbing as with the pulsations of an artery, pricks the aperture which is nearest, until at length the entire soul is pierced and maddened and pained, and at the recollection of beauty is again delighted. And from the mingling of the two feelings the soul is oppressed at the strangeness of her condition, and is in a great strait and excitement, and in her madness can neither sleep by night nor abide in her place by day. And wherever she thinks that she will behold the beautiful one, thither in her desire she runs. And when she has seen him, and bathed in the waters of desire, her constraint is loosened, and she is refreshed, and has no more pangs and pains; and this is the sweetest of all pleasures at the time, and is 252
'Fruitio dei.' the reason why the soul of the lover will never forsake his beautiful one, whom he esteems above all; he has forgotten mother and brethren and companions, and he thinks nothing of the neglect and loss of his property; the rules and proprieties of life, on which he formerly prided himself, he now despises, and is ready to sleep like a servant, wherever he is allowed, as near as he can to his desired one, who is the object of his worship, and the physician who can alone assuage the greatness of his pain. And this state, my dear imaginary youth to whom I am talking, is by men called Love, and among the gods has a name at which you, in your simplicity, may be inclined to mock; there are two lines in the apocryphal writings of Homer in which the name occurs. One of them is rather outrageous, and not altogether metrical. They are as follows:—

Phaedrus.

'Mortals call him fluttering love,
But the immortals call him winged one,
Because the growing of wings[1] is a necessity to him.'

SOCRATES.

You may believe this, but not unless you like. At any rate the loves of lovers and their causes are such as I have described.

The souls attending choose each a Deity who is suitable to their own nature.

Now the lover who is taken to be the attendant of Zeus is better able to bear the winged god, and can endure a heavier burden; but the attendants and companions of Ares, when under the influence of love, if they fancy that they have been at all wronged, are ready to kill and put an end to themselves and their beloved. And he who follows in the train of any other god, while he is unspoiled and the impression lasts, honours and imitates him, as far as he is able; and after the manner of his God he behaves in his intercourse with his beloved and with the rest of the world during the first period of his earthly existence. Every one chooses his love from the ranks of beauty according to his character, and this he makes his god, and fashions and adorns as a sort of image which he is to fall down and worship. The followers of Zeus desire that their beloved should have a soul like him; and therefore they seek out some one of a philosophical and imperial nature, and when they have found him and loved him, they do all they can to confirm such a nature in him, and if they have no experience of such a disposition hitherto, they learn of any one who can teach them, and themselves follow in the same way. And they have the less
253 difficulty in finding the nature of their own god in themselves, because they have been compelled to gaze intensely on him; their recollection clings to him, and they become possessed of him, and receive from him their character and disposition, so far as man can participate in God. The qualities of their god they attribute to the beloved, wherefore they love him all the more, and if, like the Bacchic Nymphs, they draw inspiration from Zeus, they pour out their own fountain upon him, wanting to make him as like as possible to their own god. But those who are the followers of Herè seek a royal love, and when they have found him they do just the same with him; and in like manner the followers of Apollo,

They walk in the ways of their god.

[1] Or, reading *πτερόφοιτον*, 'the movement of wings.'

Phaedrus. and of every other god walking in the ways of their god,
SOCRATES. seek a love who is to be made like him whom they serve, and when they have found him, they themselves imitate their god, and persuade their love to do the same, and educate him into the manner and nature of the god as far as they each can; for no feelings of envy or jealousy are entertained by them towards their beloved, but they do their utmost to create in him the greatest likeness of themselves and of the god whom they honour. Thus fair and blissful to the beloved is the desire of the inspired lover, and the initiation of which I speak into the mysteries of true love, if he be captured by the lover and their purpose is effected. Now the beloved is taken captive in the following manner:—

The characters of the two steeds.

At the beginning of this tale, I divided each soul into three — two horses and a charioteer; and one of the horses was good and the other bad: the division may remain, but I have not yet explained in what the goodness or badness of either consists, and to that I will now proceed. The right-hand horse is upright and cleanly made; he has a lofty neck and an aquiline nose; his colour is white, and his eyes dark; he is a lover of honour and modesty and temperance, and the follower of true glory; he needs no touch of the whip, but is guided by word and admonition only. The other is a crooked lumbering animal, put together anyhow; he has a short thick neck; he is flat-faced and of a dark colour, with grey and blood-shot eyes; the mate of insolence and pride, shag-eared and deaf, hardly yielding to whip and spur. Now when the charioteer beholds the vision of love, and has his whole soul warmed through sense, and is full of the prickings and ticklings of desire, the obedient steed, then as always under the govern- 254
ment of shame, refrains from leaping on the beloved; but the other, heedless of the pricks and of the blows of the whip, plunges and runs away, giving all manner of trouble to his companion and the charioteer, whom he forces to approach the beloved and to remember the joys of love. They at first indignantly oppose him and will not be urged on to do terrible and unlawful deeds; but at last, when he persists in plaguing them, they yield and agree to do as he

bids them. And now they are at the spot and behold the flashing beauty of the beloved; which when the charioteer sees, his memory is carried to the true beauty, whom he beholds in company with Modesty like an image placed upon a holy pedestal. He sees her, but he is afraid and falls backwards in adoration, and by his fall is compelled to pull back the reins with such violence as to bring both the steeds on their haunches, the one willing and unresisting, the unruly one very unwilling; and when they have gone back a little, the one is overcome with shame and wonder, and his whole soul is bathed in perspiration; the other, when the pain is over which the bridle and the fall had given him, having with difficulty taken breath, is full of wrath and reproaches, which he heaps upon the charioteer and his fellow-steed, for want of courage and manhood, declaring that they have been false to their agreement and guilty of desertion. Again they refuse, and again he urges them on, and will scarce yield to their prayer that he would wait until another time. When the appointed hour comes, they make as if they had forgotten, and he reminds them, fighting and neighing and dragging them on, until at length he on the same thoughts intent, forces them to draw near again. And when they are near he stoops his head and puts up his tail, and takes the bit in his teeth and pulls shamelessly. Then the charioteer is worse off than ever; he falls back like a racer at the barrier, and with a still more violent wrench drags the bit out of the teeth of the wild steed and covers his abusive tongue and jaws with blood, and forces his legs and haunches to the ground and punishes him sorely. And when this has happened several times and the villain has ceased from his wanton way, he is tamed and humbled, and follows the will of the charioteer, and when he sees the beautiful one he is ready to die of fear. And from that time forward the soul of the lover follows the beloved in modesty and holy fear.

255 And so the beloved who, like a god, has received every true and loyal service from his lover, not in pretence but in reality, being also himself of a nature friendly to his admirer [1], if in former days he has blushed to own his passion

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES.

At the vision of beauty the ill-conditioned steed rushes on to enjoy, but is restrained by his companion and by the charioteer.

The conflict grows worse and worse.

[1] Omitting *εἰς ταὐτὸν ἄγει τὴν φιλίαν.*

Phaedrus. SOCRATES. and turned away his lover, because his youthful companions or others slanderously told him that he would be disgraced, now as years advance, at the appointed age and time, is led to receive him into communion. For fate which has ordained that there shall be no friendship among the evil has also ordained that there shall ever be friendship among the good. And the beloved when he has received him into communion and intimacy, is quite amazed at the good-will of the lover; he recognises that the inspired friend is worth all other friends or kinsmen; they have nothing of friendship in them worthy to be compared with his. And when this feeling continues and he is nearer to him and embraces him, in gymnastic exercises and at other times of meeting, then the fountain of that stream, which Zeus when he was in love with Ganymede named Desire, overflows upon the lover, and some enters into his soul, and some when he is filled flows out again; and as a breeze or an echo rebounds from the smooth rocks and returns whence it came, so does the stream of beauty, passing through the eyes which are the windows of the soul, come back to the beautiful one; there arriving and quickening the passages of the wings, watering them and inclining them to grow, and filling the soul of the beloved also with love. And thus he loves, but he knows not what; he does not understand and cannot explain his own state; he appears to have caught the infection of blindness from another; the lover is his mirror in whom he is beholding himself, but he is not aware of this. When he is with the lover, both cease from their pain, but when he is away then he longs as he is longed for, and has love's image, love for love (Anteros) lodging in his breast, which he calls and believes to be not love but friendship only, and his desire is as the desire of the other, but weaker; he wants to see him, touch him, kiss, embrace him, and probably not long afterwards his desire is accomplished. When they meet, the wanton steed of the lover has a word to say to the charioteer; he would like to have a little pleasure in return for many pains, but the wanton steed of the beloved says not a word, for he is bursting with passion which he understands not;—he throws his arms round the lover and embraces him as his dearest friend; and, when they are side by side, he is

The perfect communion of the good.

The reflection of the beloved in the lover.

Some satisfaction of sensual pleasure also granted.

not in a state in which he can refuse the lover anything, if he ask him; although his fellow-steed and the charioteer oppose him with the arguments of shame and reason. After this their happiness depends upon their self-control; if the better elements of the mind which lead to order and philosophy prevail, then they pass their life here in happiness and harmony — masters of themselves and orderly — enslaving the vicious and emancipating the virtuous elements of the soul; and when the end comes, they are light and winged for flight, having conquered in one of the three heavenly or truly Olympian victories; nor can human discipline or divine inspiration confer any greater blessing on man than this. If, on the other hand, they leave philosophy and lead the lower life of ambition, then probably, after wine or in some other careless hour, the two wanton animals take the two souls when off their guard and bring them together, and they accomplish that desire of their hearts which to the many is bliss; and this having once enjoyed they continue to enjoy, yet rarely because they have not the approval of the whole soul. They too are dear, but not so dear to one another as the others, either at the time of their love or afterwards. They consider that they have given and taken from each other the most sacred pledges, and they may not break them and fall into enmity. At last they pass out of the body, unwinged, but eager to soar, and thus obtain no mean reward of love and madness. For those who have once begun the heavenward pilgrimage may not go down again to darkness and the journey beneath the earth, but they live in light always; happy companions in their pilgrimage, and when the time comes at which they receive their wings they have the same plumage because of their love.

Phaedrus. SOCRATES.

The harmony of life.

The life of philosophy and the lower life of ambition.

The end of their pilgrimage.

Thus great are the heavenly blessings which the friendship of a lover will confer upon you, my youth. Whereas the attachment of the non-lover, which is alloyed with a worldly prudence and has worldly and niggardly ways of doling out benefits, will breed in your soul those vulgar qualities which the populace applaud, will send you bowling round the earth during a period of nine thousand years, and leave you a fool in the world below.

And thus, dear Eros, I have made and paid my recantation,

Phaedrus. as well and as fairly as I could; more especially in the matter of the poetical figures which I was compelled to use, because Phaedrus would have them[1]. And now forgive the past and accept the present, and be gracious and merciful to me, and do not in thine anger deprive me of sight, or take from me the art of love which thou hast given me, but grant that I may be yet more esteemed in the eyes of the fair. And if Phaedrus or I myself said anything rude in our first speeches, blame Lysias, who is the father of the brat, and let us have no more of his progeny; bid him study philosophy, like his brother Polemarchus; and then his lover Phaedrus will no longer halt between two opinions, but will dedicate himself wholly to love and to philosophical discourses.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

The poetical form is only intended to please Phaedrus.

Phaedr. I join in the prayer, Socrates, and say with you, if this be for my good, may your words come to pass. But why did you make your second oration so much finer than the first? I wonder why. And I begin to be afraid that I shall lose conceit of Lysias, and that he will appear tame in comparison, even if he be willing to put another as fine and as long as yours into the field, which I doubt. For quite lately one of our politicians was abusing him on this very account; and called him a 'speech-writer' again and again. So that a feeling of pride may probably induce him to give up writing speeches.

The speech is far finer than that of Lysias, who will be out of conceit with himself.

Soc. What a very amusing notion! But I think, my young man, that you are much mistaken in your friend if you imagine that he is frightened at a little noise; and, possibly, you think that his assailant was in earnest?

Phaedr. I thought, Socrates, that he was. And you are aware that the greatest and most influential statesmen are ashamed of writing speeches and leaving them in a written form, lest they should be called Sophists by posterity.

Soc. You seem to be unconscious, Phaedrus, that the 'sweet elbow[2]' of the proverb is really the long arm of the Nile. And you appear to be equally unaware of the fact that

The politicians are fond of writing.

[1] See 234 C.

[2] A proverb, like 'the grapes are sour,' applied to pleasures which cannot be had, meaning sweet things which, like the elbow, are out of the reach of the mouth. The promised pleasure turns out to be a long and tedious affair.

this sweet elbow of theirs is also a long arm. For there is nothing of which our great politicians are so fond as of writing speeches and bequeathing them to posterity. And they add their admirers' names at the top of the writing, out of gratitude to them.

Phaedrus. SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. They are always rehearsing their own praises in the form of laws.

258 *Phaedr.* What do you mean? I do not understand.

Soc. Why, do you not know that when a politician writes, he begins with the names of his approvers?

Phaedr. How so?

Soc. Why, he begins in this manner: 'Be it enacted by the senate, the people, or both, on the motion of a certain person,' who is our author; and so putting on a serious face, he proceeds to display his own wisdom to his admirers in what is often a long and tedious composition. Now what is that sort of thing but a regular piece of authorship?

Phaedr. True.

Soc. And if the law is finally approved, then the author leaves the theatre in high delight; but if the law is rejected and he is done out of his speech-making, and not thought good enough to write, then he and his party are in mourning.

Phaedr. Very true.

Soc. So far are they from despising, or rather so highly do they value the practice of writing.

Phaedr. No doubt.

Soc. And when the king or orator has the power, as Lycurgus or Solon or Darius had, of attaining an immortality of authorship in a state, is he not thought by posterity, when they see his compositions, and does he not think himself, while he is yet alive, to be a god?

They become like gods.

Phaedr. Very true.

Soc. Then do you think that any one of this class, however ill-disposed, would reproach Lysias with being an author?

Phaedr. Not upon your view; for according to you he would be casting a slur upon his own favourite pursuit.

Soc. Any one may see that there is no disgrace in the mere fact of writing.

Phaedr. Certainly not.

Soc. The disgrace begins when a man writes not well, but badly.

Phaedrus. *Phaedr.* Clearly.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Soc.* And what is well and what is badly — need we ask Lysias, or any other poet or orator, who ever wrote or will write either a political or any other work, in metre or out of metre, poet or prose writer, to teach us this?

What motive is higher than the love of discourse?

Phaedr. Need we? For what should a man live if not for the pleasures of discourse? Surely not for the sake of bodily pleasures, which almost always have previous pain as a condition of them, and therefore are rightly called slavish.

Soc. There is time enough. And I believe that the grasshoppers chirruping after their manner in the heat of the sun 259
over our heads are talking to one another and looking down at us. What would they say if they saw that we, like the many, are not conversing, but slumbering at mid-day, lulled by their voices, too indolent to think? Would they not have a right to laugh at us? They might imagine that we were slaves, who, coming to rest at a place of resort of theirs, like sheep lie asleep at noon around the well. But if they see us discoursing, and like Odysseus sailing past them, deaf to their siren voices, they may perhaps, out of respect, give us of the gifts which they receive from the gods that they may impart them to men.

The grasshoppers will laugh at us if we sleep.

Phaedr. What gifts do you mean? I never heard of any.

Soc. A lover of music like yourself ought surely to have heard the story of the grasshoppers, who are said to have been human beings in an age before the Muses. And when the Muses came and song appeared they were ravished with delight; and singing always, never thought of eating and drinking, until at last in their forgetfulness they died. And now they live again in the grasshoppers; and this is the return which the Muses make to them — they neither hunger, nor thirst, but from the hour of their birth are always singing, and never eating or drinking; and when they die they go and inform the Muses in heaven who honours them on earth. They win the love of Terpsichore for the dancers by their report of them; of Erato for the lovers, and of the other Muses for those who do them honour, according to the several ways of honouring them; — of Calliope the eldest Muse and of Urania who is next to her, for the philosophers, of whose music the grasshoppers make report to

The grasshoppers were originally men who died from the love of song.

them; for these are the Muses who are chiefly concerned with heaven and thought, divine as well as human, and they have the sweetest utterance. For many reasons, then, we ought always to talk and not to sleep at mid-day.

Phaedrus. SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. Let us talk.

Soc. Shall we discuss the rules of writing and speech as we were proposing?

Phaedr. Very good.

Soc. In good speaking should not the mind of the speaker know the truth of the matter about which he is going to speak?

260 *Phaedr.* And yet, Socrates, I have heard that he who would be an orator has nothing to do with true justice, but only with that which is likely to be approved by the many who sit in judgment; nor with the truly good or honourable, but only with opinion about them, and that from opinion comes persuasion, and not from the truth.

Does the orator require to have knowledge?

Soc. The words of the wise are not to be set aside; for there is probably something in them; and therefore the meaning of this saying is not hastily to be dismissed.

Phaedr. Very true.

Soc. Let us put the matter thus:—Suppose that I persuaded you to buy a horse and go to the wars. Neither of us knew what a horse was like, but I knew that you believed a horse to be of tame animals the one which has the longest ears.

Of course. Or else he will put good for evil, just as he might put a horse in the place of an ass.

Phaedr. That would be ridiculous.

Soc. There is something more ridiculous coming:—Suppose, further, that in sober earnest I, having persuaded you of this, went and composed a speech in honour of an ass, whom I entitled a horse, beginning: 'A noble animal and a most useful possession, especially in war, and you may get on his back and fight, and he will carry baggage or anything.'

Phaedr. How ridiculous!

Soc. Ridiculous! Yes; but is not even a ridiculous friend better than a cunning enemy?

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. And when the orator instead of putting an ass in the place of a horse, puts good for evil, being himself as ignorant of their true nature as the city on which he imposes

Phaedrus. is ignorant; and having studied the notions of the multitude, falsely persuades them not about 'the shadow of an ass,' which he confounds with a horse, but about good which he confounds with evil,— what will be the harvest which rhetoric will be likely to gather after the sowing of that seed?

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. The reverse of good.

Soc. But perhaps rhetoric has been getting too roughly handled by us, and she might answer: What amazing nonsense you are talking! As if I forced any man to learn to speak in ignorance of the truth! Whatever my advice may be worth, I should have told him to arrive at the truth first, and then come to me. At the same time I boldly assert that mere knowledge of the truth will not give you the art of persuasion.

The mere knowledge of the truth not enough to give the art of persuasion. But neither is the art of persuasion separable from the truth.

Phaedr. There is reason in the lady's defence of herself.

Soc. Quite true; if only the other arguments which remain to be brought up bear her witness that she is an art at all. But I seem to hear them arraying themselves on the opposite side, declaring that she speaks falsely, and that rhetoric is a mere routine and trick, not an art. Lo! a Spartan appears, and says that there never is nor ever will be a real art of speaking which is divorced from the truth.

Phaedr. And what are these arguments, Socrates? Bring 26
them out that we may examine them.

Soc. Come out, fair children, and convince Phaedrus, who is the father of similar beauties, that he will never be able to speak about anything as he ought to speak unless he have a knowledge of philosophy. And let Phaedrus answer you.

Phaedr. Put the question.

The rhetorician can produce any impression which he pleases, in any place or upon any occasion.

Soc. Is not rhetoric, taken generally, a universal art of enchanting the mind by arguments; which is practised not only in courts and public assemblies, but in private houses also, having to do with all matters, great as well as small, good and bad alike, and is in all equally right, and equally to be esteemed — that is what you have heard?

Phaedr. Nay, not exactly that; I should say rather that I have heard the art confined to speaking and writing in lawsuits, and to speaking in public assemblies — not extended farther.

Soc. Then I suppose that you have only heard of the

rhetoric of Nestor and Odysseus, which they composed in their leisure hours when at Troy, and never of the rhetoric of Palamedes?

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. No more than of Nestor and Odysseus, unless Gorgias is your Nestor, and Thrasymachus or Theodorus your Odysseus.

Gorgias and Thrasymachus or Theodorus in the disguise of Nestor and Odysseus.

Soc. Perhaps that is my meaning. But let us leave them. And do you tell me, instead, what are plaintiff and defendant doing in a law-court — are they not contending?

Phaedr. Exactly so.

Soc. About the just and unjust — that is the matter in dispute?

Phaedr. Yes.

Soc. And a professor of the art will make the same thing appear to the same persons to be at one time just, at another time, if he is so inclined, to be unjust?

Phaedr. Exactly.

Soc. And when he speaks in the assembly, he will make the same things seem good to the city at one time, and at another time the reverse of good?

Phaedr. That is true.

Soc. Have we not heard of the Eleatic Palamedes (Zeno), who has an art of speaking by which he makes the same things appear to his hearers like and unlike, one and many, at rest and in motion?

Zeno the Eleatic.

Phaedr. Very true.

Soc. The art of disputation, then, is not confined to the courts and the assembly, but is one and the same in every use of language; this is the art, if there be such an art, which is able to find a likeness of everything to which a likeness can be found, and draws into the light of day the likenesses and disguises which are used by others?

The deceiver must know the truth because he has to find a likeness of the truth; he must learn to deceive by degrees.

Phaedr. How do you mean?

Soc. Let me put the matter thus: When will there be more chance of deception — when the difference is large or small?

262 *Phaedr.* When the difference is small.

Soc. And you will be less likely to be discovered in passing by degrees into the other extreme than when you go all at once?

Phaedrus. *Phaedr.* Of course.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Soc.* He, then, who would deceive others, and not be deceived, must exactly know the real likenesses and differences of things?

Phaedr. He must.

Soc. And if he is ignorant of the true nature of any subject, how can he detect the greater or less degree of likeness in other things to that of which by the hypothesis he is ignorant?

Phaedr. He cannot.

Soc. And when men are deceived and their notions are at variance with realities, it is clear that the error slips in through resemblances?

Phaedr. Yes, that is the way.

Soc. Then he who would be a master of the art must understand the real nature of everything; or he will never know either how to make the gradual departure from truth into the opposite of truth which is effected by the help of resemblances, or how to avoid it?

Phaedr. He will not.

Soc. He then, who being ignorant of the truth aims at appearances, will only attain an art of rhetoric which is ridiculous and is not an art at all?

Phaedr. That may be expected.

Illustrations of skill and want of skill from the speech of Lysias.

Soc. Shall I propose that we look for examples of art and want of art, according to our notion of them, in the speech of Lysias which you have in your hand, and in my own speech?

Phaedr. Nothing could be better; and indeed I think that our previous argument has been too abstract and wanting in illustrations.

Soc. Yes; and the two speeches happen to afford a very good example of the way in which the speaker who knows the truth may, without any serious purpose, steal away the hearts of his hearers. This piece of good-fortune I attribute to the local deities; and, perhaps, the prophets of the Muses who are singing over our heads may have imparted their inspiration to me. For I do not imagine that I have any rhetorical art of my own.

Phaedr. Granted; if you will only please to get on.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Soc. Suppose that you read me the first words of Lysias' speech.

Phaedr. 'You know how matters stand with me, and how, as I conceive, they might be arranged for our common interest; and I maintain that I ought not to fail in my suit, because I am not your lover. For lovers repent ——'

263 *Soc.* Enough:— Now, shall I point out the rhetorical error of those words?

Phaedr. Yes.

The rhetorician should distinguish things such as iron and silver, about which we are agreed, from things such as justice and goodness, about which we are disagreed.

Soc. Every one is aware that about some things we are agreed, whereas about other things we differ.

Phaedr. I think that I understand you; but will you explain yourself?

Soc. When any one speaks of iron and silver, is not the same thing present in the minds of all?

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. But when any one speaks of justice and goodness we part company and are at odds with one another and with ourselves?

Phaedr. Precisely.

Soc. Then in some things we agree, but not in others?

Phaedr. That is true.

Soc. In which are we more likely to be deceived, and in which has rhetoric the greater power?

Phaedr. Clearly, in the uncertain class.

Soc. Then the rhetorician ought to make a regular division, and acquire a distinct notion of both classes, as well of that in which the many err, as of that in which they do not err?

Phaedr. He who made such a distinction would have an excellent principle.

Soc. Yes; and in the next place he must have a keen eye for the observation of particulars in speaking, and not make a mistake about the class to which they are to be referred.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Love belongs to the debatable class.

Soc. Now to which class does love belong — to the debatable or to the undisputed class?

Phaedr. To the debatable, clearly; for if not, do you think that love would have allowed you to say as you did,

Phaedrus. that he is an evil both to the lover and the beloved, and also the greatest possible good?

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Soc.* Capital. But will you tell me whether I defined love at the beginning of my speech? for, having been in an ecstasy, I cannot well remember.

Phaedr. Yes, indeed; that you did, and no mistake.

Lysias should have begun, as I did, by defining love. *Soc.* Then I perceive that the Nymphs of Achelous and Pan the son of Hermes, who inspired me, were far better rhetoricians than Lysias the son of Cephalus. Alas! how inferior to them he is! But perhaps I am mistaken; and Lysias at the commencement of his lover's speech did insist on our supposing love to be something or other which he fancied him to be, and according to this model he fashioned and framed the remainder of his discourse. Suppose we read his beginning over again:

Phaedr. If you please; but you will not find what you want.

Soc. Read, that I may have his exact words.

Phaedr. 'You know how matters stand with me, and how, as I conceive, they might be arranged for our common 264
interest; and I maintain I ought not to fail in my suit because I am not your lover, for lovers repent of the kindnesses which they have shown, when their love is over.'

He begins at the end. *Soc.* Here he appears to have done just the reverse of what he ought; for he has begun at the end, and is swimming on his back through the flood to the place of starting. His address to the fair youth begins where the lover would have ended. Am I not right, sweet Phaedrus?

Phaedr. Yes, indeed, Socrates; he does begin at the end.

No order or arrangement of parts in his discourse. *Soc.* Then as to the other topics — are they not thrown down anyhow? Is there any principle in them? Why should the next topic follow next in order, or any other topic? I cannot help fancying in my ignorance that he wrote off boldly just what came into his head, but I dare say that you would recognize a rhetorical necessity in the succession of the several parts of the composition?

Phaedr. You have too good an opinion of me if you think that I have any such insight into his principles of composition.

Soc. At any rate, you will allow that every discourse

ought to be a living creature, having a body of its own and a head and feet; there should be a middle, beginning, and end, adapted to one another and to the whole?

Phaedrus.

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Every discourse should be a living creature, having a body, head, and feet.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. Can this be said of the discourse of Lysias? See whether you can find any more connexion in his words than in the epitaph which is said by some to have been inscribed on the grave of Midas the Phrygian.

Phaedr. What is there remarkable in the epitaph?

Soc. It is as follows:—

> 'I am a maiden of bronze and lie on the tomb of Midas;
> So long as water flows and tall trees grow,
> So long here on this spot by his sad tomb abiding,
> I shall declare to passers-by that Midas sleeps below.'

The discourse of Lysias had no more arrangement than the silliest of epitaphs.

Now in this rhyme whether a line comes first or comes last, as you will perceive, makes no difference.

Phaedr. You are making fun of that oration of ours.

Soc. Well, I will say no more about your friend's speech lest I should give offence to you; although I think that it might furnish many other examples of what a man ought
265 rather to avoid. But I will proceed to the other speech, which, as I think, is also suggestive to students of rhetoric.

Phaedr. In what way?

Soc. The two speeches, as you may remember, were unlike; the one argued that the lover and the other that the non-lover ought to be accepted.

Phaedr. And right manfully.

Soc. You should rather say 'madly;' and madness was the argument of them, for, as I said, 'love is a madness.'

Phaedr. Yes.

Soc. And of madness there were two kinds; one produced by human infirmity, the other was a divine release of the soul from the yoke of custom and convention.

Phaedr. True.

Four subdivisions of madness—prophetic, initiatory, poetic, erotic.

Soc. The divine madness was subdivided into four kinds, prophetic, initiatory, poetic, erotic, having four gods presiding over them; the first was the inspiration of Apollo, the second that of Dionysus, the third that of the Muses, the fourth that of Aphrodite and Eros. In the description of the last kind of madness, which was also said to be the best, we

Phaedrus. SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

spoke of the affection of love in a figure, into which we introduced a tolerably credible and possibly true though partly erring myth, which was also a hymn in honour of Love, who is your lord and also mine, Phaedrus, and the guardian of fair children, and to him we sung the hymn in measured and solemn strain.

Phaedr. I know that I had great pleasure in listening to you.

Soc. Let us take this instance and note how the transition was made from blame to praise.

Phaedr. What do you mean?

The myth was a creation of fancy, yet true principles were involved in it: (1) unity of particulars in a single note; (2) natural division into species.

Soc. I mean to say that the composition was mostly playful. Yet in these chance fancies of the hour were involved two principles of which we should be too glad to have a clearer description if art could give us one.

Phaedr. What are they?

Soc. First, the comprehension of scattered particulars in one idea; as in our definition of love, which whether true or false certainly gave clearness and consistency to the discourse, the speaker should define his several notions and so make his meaning clear.

Phaedr. What is the other principle, Socrates?

Soc. The second principle is that of division into species according to the natural formation, where the joint is, not breaking any part as a bad carver might. Just as our two 26
discourses, alike assumed, first of all, a single form of unreason; and then, as the body which from being one becomes double and may be divided into a left side and right side, each having parts right and left of the same name — after this manner the speaker proceeded to divide the parts of the left side and did not desist until he found in them an evil or left-handed love which he justly reviled; and the other discourse leading us to the madness which lay on the right side, found another love, also having the same name, but divine, which the speaker held up before us and applauded and affirmed to be the author of the greatest benefits.

The dialectician is concerned with the one and many.

Phaedr. Most true.

Soc. I am myself a great lover of these processes of division and generalization; they help me to speak and to think. And if I find any man who is able to see 'a One and

Many' in nature, him I follow, and 'walk in his footsteps as if he were a god.' And those who have this art, I have hitherto been in the habit of calling dialecticians; but God knows whether the name is right or not. And I should like to know what name you would give to your or to Lysias' disciples, and whether this may not be that famous art of rhetoric which Thrasymachus and others teach and practise? Skilful speakers they are, and impart their skill to any who is willing to make kings of them and to bring gifts to them. *Phaedrus.* SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. Yes, they are royal men; but their art is not the same with the art of those whom you call, and rightly, in my opinion, dialecticians:—Still we are in the dark about rhetoric. He is not to be confused with the rhetorician.

Soc. What do you mean? The remains of it, if there be anything remaining which can be brought under rules of art, must be a fine thing; and, at any rate, is not to be despised by you and me. But how much is left? Still rhetoric when separated from dialectic must be a valuable art.

Phaedr. There is a great deal surely to be found in books of rhetoric?

Soc. Yes; thank you for reminding me:—There is the exordium, showing how the speech should begin, if I remember rightly; that is what you mean—the niceties of the art?

Phaedr. Yes.

Soc. Then follows the statement of facts, and upon that witnesses; thirdly, proofs; fourthly, probabilities are to come; the great Byzantian word-maker also speaks, if I am not mistaken, of confirmation and further confirmation.

Phaedr. You mean the excellent Theodorus. Theodorus.

267 *Soc.* Yes; and he tells how refutation or further refutation is to be managed, whether in accusation or defence. I ought also to mention the illustrious Parian, Evenus, who first invented insinuations and indirect praises; and also indirect censures, which according to some he put into verse to help the memory. But shall I 'to dumb forgetfulness consign' Tisias and Gorgias, who are not ignorant that probability is superior to truth, and who by force of argument make the little appear great and the great little, disguise the new in old fashions and the old in new fashions, and have discovered forms for everything, either short or going on to infinity. I remember Prodicus laughing when Evenus. Tisias and Gorgias.

Phaedrus. I told him of this; he said that he had himself discovered
SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. the true rule of art, which was to be neither long nor short, but of a convenient length.

Prodicus. *Phaedr.* Well done, Prodicus!

Hippias. *Soc.* Then there is Hippias the Elean stranger, who probably agrees with him.

Phaedr. Yes.

Polus. *Soc.* And there is also Polus, who has treasuries of diplasiology, and gnomology, and eikonology, and who teaches
Licymnius. in them the names of which Licymnius made him a present; they were to give a polish.

Protagoras. *Phaedr.* Had not Protagoras something of the same sort?

Soc. Yes, rules of correct diction and many other fine pre-
Thrasymachus again. cepts; for the 'sorrows of a poor old man,' or any other pathetic case, no one is better than the Chalcedonian giant; he can put a whole company of people into a passion and out of one again by his mighty magic, and is first-rate at inventing or disposing of any sort of calumny on any grounds or none. All of them agree in asserting that a speech should end in a recapitulation, though they do not all agree to use the same word.

Phaedr. You mean that there should be a summing up of the arguments in order to remind the hearers of them.

Soc. I have now said all that I have to say of the art of rhetoric: have you anything to add?

Phaedr. Not much; nothing very important.

Soc. Leave the unimportant and let us bring the really 268
important question into the light of day, which is: What power has this art of rhetoric, and when?

Phaedr. A very great power in public meetings.

Rhetoric a superficial art. *Soc.* It has. But I should like to know whether you have the same feeling as I have about the rhetoricians? To me there seem to be a great many holes in their web.

Phaedr. Give an example.

Soc. I will. Suppose a person to come to your friend Eryximachus, or to his father Acumenus, and to say to him: 'I know how to apply drugs which shall have either a heating or a cooling effect, and I can give a vomit and also a purge, and all that sort of thing; and knowing all this, as I do, I claim to be a physician and to make physicians by

imparting this knowledge to others,'—what do you suppose that they would say? *Phaedrus.*

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Phaedr. They would be sure to ask him whether he knew 'to whom' he would give his medicines, and 'when,' and 'how much.'

Soc. And suppose that he were to reply: 'No; I know nothing of all that; I expect the patient who consults me to be able to do these things for himself'?

Phaedr. They would say in reply that he is a madman or a pedant who fancies that he is a physician because he has read something in a book, or has stumbled on a prescription or two, although he has no real understanding of the art of medicine.

What would Sophocles or Euripides say to the professors of rhetoric?

Soc. And suppose a person were to come to Sophocles or Euripides and say that he knows how to make a very long speech about a small matter, and a short speech about a great matter, and also a sorrowful speech, or a terrible, or threatening speech, or any other kind of speech, and in teaching this fancies that he is teaching the art of tragedy—?

Phaedr. They too would surely laugh at him if he fancies that tragedy is anything but the arranging of these elements in a manner which will be suitable to one another and to the whole.

Soc. But I do not suppose that they would be rude or abusive to him: Would they not treat him as a musician would a man who thinks that he is a harmonist because he knows how to pitch the highest and lowest note; happening to meet such an one he would not say to him savagely, 'Fool, you are mad!' But like a musician, in a gentle and harmonious tone of voice, he would answer: 'My good friend, he who would be a harmonist must certainly know this, and yet he may understand nothing of harmony if he has not got beyond your stage of knowledge, for you only know the preliminaries of harmony and not harmony itself.'

They would say to him in the most courteous manner and in the sweetest tone of voice, 'You only know the alphabet of your art.'

Phaedr. Very true.

269 *Soc.* And will not Sophocles say to the display of the would-be tragedian, that this is not tragedy but the preliminaries of tragedy? and will not Acumenus say the same of medicine to the would-be physician?

Phaedr. Quite true.

Soc. And if Adrastus the mellifluous or Pericles heard of

Phaedrus.

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these wonderful arts, brachylogies and eikonologies and all the hard names which we have been endeavouring to draw into the light of day, what would they say? Instead of losing temper and applying uncomplimentary epithets, as you and I have been doing, to the authors of such an imaginary art, their superior wisdom would rather censure us, as well as them. 'Have a little patience, Phaedrus and Socrates, they would say; you should not be in such a passion with those who from some want of dialectical skill are unable to define the nature of rhetoric, and consequently suppose that they have found the art in the preliminary conditions of it, and when these have been taught by them to others, fancy that the whole art of rhetoric has been taught by them; but as to using the several instruments of the art effectively, or making the composition a whole,—an application of it such as this is they consider to be an easy thing which their disciples may make for themselves.'

We should not be too hard on the rhetorician for teaching only part of his art.

Phaedr. I quite admit, Socrates, that the art of rhetoric which these men teach and of which they write is such as you describe—there I agree with you. But I still want to know where and how the true art of rhetoric and persuasion is to be acquired.

Soc. The perfection which is required of the finished orator is, or rather must be, like the perfection of anything else, partly given by nature, but may also be assisted by art. If you have the natural power and add to it knowledge and practice, you will be a distinguished speaker; if you fall short in either of these, you will be to that extent defective. But the art, as far as there is an art, of rhetoric does not lie in the direction of Lysias or Thrasymachus.

The perfection of oratory is partly a gift of nature. But it may be improved by art. This art, however, is not the art of Thrasymachus, but partakes of the nature of philosophy.

Phaedr. In what direction then?

Soc. I conceive Pericles to have been the most accomplished of rhetoricians.

Phaedr. What of that?

Soc. All the great arts require discussion and high speculation about the truths of nature; hence come loftiness of 2
thought and completeness of execution. And this, as I conceive, was the quality which, in addition to his natural gifts, Pericles acquired from his intercourse with Anaxagoras whom he happened to know. He was thus imbued with the

higher philosophy, and attained the knowledge of Mind and the negative of Mind, which were favourite themes of Anaxagoras, and applied what suited his purpose to the art of speaking. *Phaedrus.* SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. Explain.

Soc. Rhetoric is like medicine.

Phaedr. How so?

Soc. Why, because medicine has to define the nature of the body and rhetoric of the soul — if we would proceed, not empirically but scientifically, in the one case to impart health and strength by giving medicine and food, in the other to implant the conviction or virtue which you desire, by the right application of words and training.

Phaedr. There, Socrates, I suspect that you are right.

Soc. And do you think that you can know the nature of the soul intelligently without knowing the nature of the whole?

Phaedr. Hippocrates the Asclepiad says that the nature even of the body can only be understood as a whole[1].

Soc. Yes, friend, and he was right: — still, we ought not to be content with the name of Hippocrates, but to examine and see whether his argument agrees with his conception of nature.

Phaedr. I agree.

Soc. Then consider what truth as well as Hippocrates says about this or about any other nature. Ought we not to consider first whether that which we wish to learn and to teach is a simple or multiform thing, and if simple, then to enquire what power it has of acting or being acted upon in relation to other things, and if multiform, then to number the forms; and see first in the case of one of them, and then in the case of all of them, what is that power of acting or being acted upon which makes each and all of them to be what they are? First there must be an analysis of the soul.

Phaedr. You may very likely be right, Socrates.

Soc. The method which proceeds without analysis is like the groping of a blind man. Yet, surely, he who is an artist ought not to admit of a comparison with the blind, or deaf. The rhetorician, who teaches his pupil to speak scientifically, will particularly set forth the nature of that being to which he addresses his speeches; and this, I conceive, to be the soul.

[1] Cp. Charmides, 156 C.

Phaedrus. *Phaedr.* Certainly.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Soc.* His whole effort is directed to the soul; for in that 2
he seeks to produce conviction.

Phaedr. Yes.

Soc. Then clearly, Thrasymachus or any one else who teaches rhetoric in earnest will give an exact description of the nature of the soul; which will enable us to see whether she be single and same, or, like the body, multiform. That is what we should call showing the nature of the soul.

Phaedr. Exactly.

Then the rhetorician must show by what means the soul affects or is affected, and why one soul in one way and another in another.

Soc. He will explain, secondly, the mode in which she acts or is acted upon.

Phaedr. True.

Soc. Thirdly, having classified men and speeches, and their kinds and affections, and adapted them to one another, he will tell the reasons of his arrangement, and show why one soul is persuaded by a particular form of argument, and another not.

Phaedr. You have hit upon a very good way.

Soc. Yes, that is the true and only way in which any subject can be set forth or treated by rules of art, whether in speaking or writing. But the writers of the present day, at whose feet you have sat, craftily conceal the nature of the soul which they know quite well. Nor, until they adopt our method of reading and writing, can we admit that they write by rules of art?

Phaedr. What is our method?

Soc. I cannot give you the exact details; but I should like to tell you generally, as far as is in my power, how a man ought to proceed according to rules of art.

Phaedr. Let me hear.

Oratory is the art of enchanting the soul, and therefore the orator must learn the differences of human souls by reflection and experience.

Soc. Oratory is the art of enchanting the soul, and therefore he who would be an orator has to learn the differences of human souls — they are so many and of such a nature, and from them come the differences between man and man. Having proceeded thus far in his analysis, he will next divide speeches into their different classes:—'Such and such persons,' he will say, 'are affected by this or that kind of speech in this or that way,' and he will tell you why. The pupil must have a good theoretical notion of them first, and

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

then he must have experience of them in actual life, and be able to follow them with all his senses about him, or he will never get beyond the precepts of his masters. But when he understands what persons are persuaded by what arguments, and sees the person about whom he was speaking in the abstract actually before him, and knows that it is he, and can say to himself, 'This is the man or this is the character who ought to have a certain argument applied to him in order to convince him of a certain opinion;'—he who knows all this, and knows also when he should speak and when he should refrain, and when he should use pithy sayings, pathetic appeals, sensational effects, and all the other modes of speech which he has learned;—when, I say, he knows the times and seasons of all these things, then, and not till then, he is a perfect master of his art; but if he fail in any of these points, whether in speaking or teaching or writing them, and yet declares that he speaks by rules of art, he who says 'I don't believe you' has the better of him. Well, the teacher will say, is this, Phaedrus and Socrates, your account of the so-called art of rhetoric, or am I to look for another?

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Knowledge of individual character necessary to the rhetorician.

Phaedr. He must take this, Socrates, for there is no possibility of another, and yet the creation of such an art is not easy.

Soc. Very true; and therefore let us consider this matter in every light, and see whether we cannot find a shorter and easier road; there is no use in taking a long rough roundabout way if there be a shorter and easier one. And I wish that you would try and remember whether you have heard from Lysias or any one else anything which might be of service to us.

Phaedr. If trying would avail, then I might; but at the moment I can think of nothing.

Soc. Suppose I tell you something which somebody who knows told me.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. May not 'the wolf,' as the proverb says, 'claim a hearing'?

Phaedr. Do you say what can be said for him.

Soc. He will argue that there is no use in putting a solemn face on these matters, or in going round and round, until you

But 'the wolf' says that in

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

courts of law no one cares about truth.

arrive at first principles; for, as I said at first, when the question is of justice and good, or is a question in which men are concerned who are just and good, either by nature or habit, he who would be a skilful rhetorician has no need of truth — for that in courts of law men literally care nothing about truth, but only about conviction: and this is based on probability, to which he who would be a skilful orator should therefore give his whole attention. And they say also that there are cases in which the actual facts, if they are improbable, ought to be withheld, and only the probabilities should be told either in accusation or defence, and that always in speaking, the orator should keep probability in view, and say good-bye to the truth. And the observance of this principle 27
throughout a speech furnishes the whole art.

Phaedr. That is what the professors of rhetoric do actually say, Socrates. I have not forgotten that we have quite briefly touched upon this matter[1] already; with them the point is all-important.

Soc. I dare say that you are familiar with Tisias. Does he not define probability to be that which the many think?

Phaedr. Certainly, he does.

Soc. I believe that he has a clever and ingenious case of this sort:— He supposes a feeble and valiant man to have assaulted a strong and cowardly one, and to have robbed him of his coat or of something or other; he is brought into court, and then Tisias says that both parties should tell lies: the coward should say that he was assaulted by more men than one; the other should prove that they were alone, and should argue thus: 'How could a weak man like me have assaulted a strong man like him?' The complainant will not like to confess his own cowardice, and will therefore invent some other lie which his adversary will thus gain an opportunity of refuting. And there are other devices of the same kind which have a place in the system. Am I not right, Phaedrus?

According to Tisias, either party should tell a lie of a sort which the other would be unwilling or unable to refute.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. Bless me, what a wonderfully mysterious art is this which Tisias or some other gentleman, in whatever name or country he rejoices, has discovered. Shall we say a word to him or not?

[1] Cp. 259 E.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

To him we reply that a man should learn to say what is acceptable to God. This is the true beginning of rhetoric.

Phaedr. What shall we say to him?

Soc. Let us tell him that, before he appeared, you and I were saying that the probability of which he speaks was engendered in the minds of the many by the likeness of the truth, and we had just been affirming that he who knew the truth would always know best how to discover the resemblances of the truth. If he has anything else to say about the art of speaking we should like to hear him; but if not, we are satisfied with our own view, that unless a man estimates the various characters of his hearers and is able to divide all things into classes and to comprehend them under single ideas, he will never be a skilful rhetorician even within the limits of human power. And this skill he will not attain without a great deal of trouble, which a good man ought to undergo, not for the sake of speaking and acting before men, but in order that he may be able to say what is acceptable to God and always to act acceptably to Him as far as in him
274 lies; for there is a saying of wiser men than ourselves, that a man of sense should not try to please his fellow-servants (at least this should not be his first object) but his good and noble masters; and therefore if the way is long and circuitous, marvel not at this, for, where the end is great, there we may take the longer road, but not for lesser ends such as yours. Truly, the argument may say, Tisias, that if you do not mind going so far, rhetoric has a fair beginning here.

Phaedr. I think, Socrates, that this is admirable, if only practicable.

Soc. But even to fail in an honourable object is honourable.

Phaedr. True.

Soc. Enough appears to have been said by us of a true and false art of speaking.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. But there is something yet to be said of propriety and impropriety of writing.

Phaedr. Yes.

Soc. Do you know how you can speak or act about rhetoric in a manner which will be acceptable to God?

Phaedr. No, indeed. Do you?

Soc. I have heard a tradition of the ancients, whether true or not they only know; although if we had found the truth

Phaedrus. ourselves, do you think that we should care much about the opinions of men?

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS. *Phaedr.* Your question needs no answer; but I wish that you would tell me what you say that you have heard.

The ingenuity of the god Theuth, who was the inventor of letters, rebuked by King Thamus, also called Ammon.

Soc. At the Egyptian city of Naucratis, there was a famous old god, whose name was Theuth; the bird which is called the Ibis is sacred to him, and he was the inventor of many arts, such as arithmetic and calculation and geometry and astronomy and draughts and dice, but his great discovery was the use of letters. Now in those days the god Thamus was the king of the whole country of Egypt; and he dwelt in that great city of Upper Egypt which the Hellenes call Egyptian Thebes, and the god himself is called by them Ammon. To him came Theuth and showed his inventions, desiring that the other Egyptians might be allowed to have the benefit of them; he enumerated them, and Thamus enquired about their several uses, and praised some of them and censured others, as he approved or disapproved of them. It would take a long time to repeat all that Thamus said to Theuth in praise or blame of the various arts. But when they came to letters, This, said Theuth, will make the Egyptians wiser and give them better memories; it is a specific both for the memory and for the wit. Thamus replied: O most ingenious Theuth, the parent or inventor of an art is not always the best judge of the utility or inutility of his own inventions to the users of them. And in this instance, you who are the 2
father of letters, from a paternal love of your own children have been led to attribute to them a quality which they cannot have; for this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves. The specific which you have discovered is an aid not to memory, but to reminiscence, and you give your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth; they will be hearers of many things and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing; they will be tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality.

Phaedr. Yes, Socrates, you can easily invent tales of Egypt, or of any other country.

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Soc. There was a tradition in the temple of Dodona that oaks first gave prophetic utterances. The men of old, unlike in their simplicity to young philosophy, deemed that if they heard the truth even from 'oak or rock,' it was enough for them; whereas you seem to consider not whether a thing is or is not true, but who the speaker is and from what country the tale comes.

The scepticism of Phaedrus reproved by Socrates.

Phaedr. I acknowledge the justice of your rebuke; and I think that the Theban is right in his view about letters.

Writing far inferior to recollection.

Soc. He would be a very simple person, and quite a stranger to the oracles of Thamus or Ammon, who should leave in writing or receive in writing any art under the idea that the written word would be intelligible or certain; or who deemed that writing was at all better than knowledge and recollection of the same matters?

Phaedr. That is most true.

Writing is like painting: it is silent ever, and cannot, unlike speech, be adapted to individuals.

Soc. I cannot help feeling, Phaedrus, that writing is unfortunately like painting; for the creations of the painter have the attitude of life, and yet if you ask them a question they preserve a solemn silence. And the same may be said of speeches. You would imagine that they had intelligence, but if you want to know anything and put a question to one of them, the speaker always gives one unvarying answer. And when they have been once written down they are tumbled about anywhere among those who may or may not understand them, and know not to whom they should reply, to whom not: and, if they are maltreated or abused, they have no parent to protect them; and they cannot protect or defend themselves.

Phaedr. That again is most true.

But there is another kind of writing graven on the tablets of the mind.

Soc. Is there not another kind of word or speech far better than this, and having far greater power — a son of the
276 same family, but lawfully begotten?

Phaedr. Whom do you mean, and what is his origin?

Soc. I mean an intelligent word graven in the soul of the learner, which can defend itself, and knows when to speak and when to be silent.

Phaedr. You mean the living word of knowledge which has a soul, and of which the written word is properly no more than an image?

Soc. Yes, of course that is what I mean. And now may

Phaedrus.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

What man of sense would plant seeds in an artificial garden, to bring forth fruit or flowers in eight days, and not in deeper and more fitting soil?

I be allowed to ask you a question: Would a husbandman, who is a man of sense, take the seeds, which he values and which he wishes to bear fruit, and in sober seriousness plant them during the heat of summer, in some garden of Adonis, that he may rejoice when he sees them in eight days appearing in beauty? at least he would do so, if at all, only for the sake of amusement and pastime. But when he is in earnest he sows in fitting soil, and practises husbandry, and is satisfied if in eight months the seeds which he has sown arrive at perfection?

Phaedr. Yes, Socrates, that will be his way when he is in earnest; he will do the other, as you say, only in play.

Soc. And can we suppose that he who knows the just and good and honourable has less understanding, than the husbandman, about his own seeds?

Phaedr. Certainly not.

Soc. Then he will not seriously incline to 'write' his thoughts 'in water' with pen and ink, sowing words which can neither speak for themselves nor teach the truth adequately to others?

Phaedr. No, that is not likely.

As a pastime he may plant his fair thoughts in the garden,

Soc. No, that is not likely — in the garden of letters he will sow and plant, but only for the sake of recreation and amusement; he will write them down as memorials to be treasured against the forgetfulness of old age, by himself, or by any other old man who is treading the same path. He will rejoice in beholding their tender growth; and while others are refreshing their souls with banqueting and the like, this will be the pastime in which his days are spent.

Phaedr. A pastime, Socrates, as noble as the other is ignoble, the pastime of a man who can be amused by serious talk, and can discourse merrily about justice and the like.

but his serious aim will be to implant them in his own and other noble natures.

Soc. True, Phaedrus. But nobler far is the serious pursuit of the dialectician, who, finding a congenial soul, by the help of science sows and plants therein words which are able to help themselves and him who planted them, 2
and are not unfruitful, but have in them a seed which others brought up in different soils render immortal, making the possessors of it happy to the utmost extent of human happiness.

Phaedr. Far nobler, certainly. *Phaedrus.*

Soc. And now, Phaedrus, having agreed upon the premises we may decide about the conclusion. SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. About what conclusion?

Soc. About Lysias, whom we censured, and his art of writing, and his discourses, and the rhetorical skill or want of skill which was shown in them — these are the questions which we sought to determine, and they brought us to this point. And I think that we are now pretty well informed about the nature of art and its opposite.

Phaedr. Yes, I think with you; but I wish that you would repeat what was said.

Soc. Until a man knows the truth of the several particulars of which he is writing or speaking, and is able to define them as they are, and having defined them again to divide them until they can be no longer divided, and until in like manner he is able to discern the nature of the soul, and discover the different modes of discourse which are adapted to different natures, and to arrange and dispose them in such a way that the simple form of speech may be addressed to the simpler nature, and the complex and composite to the more complex nature — until he has accomplished all this, he will be unable to handle arguments according to rules of art, as far as their nature allows them to be subjected to art, either for the purpose of teaching or persuading; — such is the view which is implied in the whole preceding argument.

The conclusion: — A man must be able to know and define and denote the subjects of which he is speaking, and to discern the natures of those whom he is addressing.

Phaedr. Yes, that was our view, certainly.

Soc. Secondly, as to the censure which was passed on the speaking or writing of discourses, and how they might be rightly or wrongly censured — did not our previous argument show —?

Phaedr. Show what?

Soc. That whether Lysias or any other writer that ever was or will be, whether private man or statesman, proposes laws and so becomes the author of a political treatise, fancying that there is any great certainty and clearness in his performance, the fact of his so writing is only a disgrace to him, whatever men may say. For not to know the nature of justice and injustice, and good and evil, and not to be able to distinguish the dream from the reality, cannot in truth be

The legislator or statesman must know the nature of justice or injustice, good and evil. To Lysias or to any

Phaedrus. otherwise than disgraceful to him, even though he have the applause of the whole world.

SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. Certainly.

man ignorance of all these things is a disgrace.

Soc. But he who thinks that in the written word there is necessarily much which is not serious, and that neither poetry nor prose, spoken or written, is of any great value, if, like the compositions of the rhapsodes, they are only recited

But if there is any one who has faith in oral instruction and in the reminiscence of ideas,—with him we sympathize, and pray that we may become like him.

in order to be believed, and not with any view to criticism or 278 instruction; and who thinks that even the best of writings are but a reminiscence of what we know, and that only in principles of justice and goodness and nobility taught and communicated orally for the sake of instruction and graven in the soul, which is the true way of writing, is there clearness and perfection and seriousness, and that such principles are a man's own and his legitimate offspring;—being, in the first place, the word which he finds in his own bosom; secondly, the brethren and descendants and relations of his idea which have been duly implanted by him in the souls of others;—and who cares for them and no others—this is the right sort of man; and you and I, Phaedrus, would pray that we may become like him.

Phaedr. That is most assuredly my desire and prayer.

Poets, orators, legislators, if their compositions are based on truth, are worthy to be called philosophers.

Soc. And now the play is played out; and of rhetoric enough. Go and tell Lysias that to the fountain and school of the Nymphs we went down, and were bidden by them to convey a message to him and to other composers of speeches —to Homer and other writers of poems, whether set to music or not; and to Solon and others who have composed writings in the form of political discourses which they would term laws—to all of them we are to say that if their compositions are based on knowledge of the truth, and they can defend or prove them, when they are put to the test, by spoken arguments, which leave their writings poor in comparison of them, then they are to be called, not only poets, orators, legislators, but are worthy of a higher name, befitting the serious pursuit of their life.

Phaedr. What name would you assign to them?

Soc. Wise, I may not call them; for that is a great name which belongs to God alone,—lovers of wisdom or philosophers is their modest and befitting title.

Phaedr. Very suitable. *Phaedrus.*

Soc. And he who cannot rise above his own compilations and compositions, which he has been long patching and piecing, adding some and taking away some, may be justly called poet or speech-maker or law-maker. SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

Phaedr. Certainly.

Soc. Now go and tell this to your companion. Give this as our message to Lysias.

Phaedr. But there is also a friend of yours who ought not to be forgotten.

Soc. Who is he?

279 *Phaedr.* Isocrates the fair:—What message will you send to him, and how shall we describe him?

Soc. Isocrates is still young, Phaedrus; but I am willing to hazard a prophecy concerning him. Another message to Isocrates, which is expressed in terms of the highest praise.

Phaedr. What would you prophesy?

Soc. I think that he has a genius which soars above the orations of Lysias, and that his character is cast in a finer mould. My impression of him is that he will marvellously improve as he grows older, and that all former rhetoricians will be as children in comparison of him. And I believe that he will not be satisfied with rhetoric, but that there is in him a divine inspiration which will lead him to things higher still. For he has an element of philosophy in his nature. This is the message of the gods dwelling in this place, and which I will myself deliver to Isocrates, who is my delight; and do you give the other to Lysias, who is yours.

Phaedr. I will; and now as the heat is abated let us depart.

Soc. Should we not offer up a prayer first of all to the local deities?

Phaedr. By all means.

Soc. Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who haunt this place, give me beauty in the inward soul; and may the outward and inward man be at one. May I reckon the wise to be the wealthy, and may I have such a quantity of gold as a temperate man and he only can bear and carry.—Anything more? The prayer, I think, is enough for me.

Phaedr. Ask the same for me, for friends should have all things in common.

Soc. Let us go.

ION.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Ion is the shortest, or nearly the shortest, of all the writings which bear the name of Plato, and is not authenticated by any early external testimony. The grace and beauty of this little work supply the only, and perhaps a sufficient, proof of its genuineness. The plan is simple; the dramatic interest consists entirely in the contrast between the irony of Socrates and the transparent vanity and childlike enthusiasm of the rhapsode Ion. The theme of the Dialogue may possibly have been suggested by the passage of Xenophon's Memorabilia (iv. 2, 10) in which the rhapsodists are described by Euthydemus as 'very precise about the exact words of Homer, but very idiotic themselves.' (Cp. Aristotle, Met. xiii. chap. 6. § 7.)

ANALYSIS.

Steph. 530 Ion the rhapsode has just come to Athens; he has been exhibiting in Epidaurus at the festival of Asclepius, and is intending to exhibit at the festival of the Panathenaea. Socrates admires and envies the rhapsode's art; for he is always well dressed and in good company — in the company of good poets and of Homer, who is the prince of them. In the course of conversation the 531 admission is elicited from Ion that his skill is restricted to Homer, and that he knows nothing of inferior poets, such as Hesiod and Archilochus; — he brightens up and is wide awake when Homer is being recited, but is apt to go to sleep at the recitations of any other poet. 'And yet, surely, he who knows the superior ought 532 to know the inferior also; — he who can judge of the good speaker is able to judge of the bad. And poetry is a whole; and he who judges of poetry by rules of art ought to be able to judge of 533 all poetry.' This is confirmed by the analogy of sculpture, painting, flute-playing, and the other arts. The argument is at last brought home to the mind of Ion, who asks how this

contradiction is to be solved. The solution given by Socrates is as follows: —

The rhapsode is not guided by rules of art, but is an inspired person who derives a mysterious power from the poet; and the poet, in like manner, is inspired by the God. The poets and their 534
interpreters may be compared to a chain of magnetic rings suspended from one another, and from a magnet. The magnet is the Muse, and the ring which immediately follows is the poet himself; from him are suspended other poets; there is a chain of rhapsodes and actors, who also hang from the Muses, but are let down at the side; and the last ring of all is the spectator. The poet is the inspired interpreter of the God, and this is the reason why some poets, like Homer, are restricted to a single theme, or, like Tynnichus, are famous for a single poem; and the rhapsode is the inspired interpreter of the poet, and for a similar reason some rhapsodes, like Ion, are the interpreters of single poets.

Ion is delighted at the notion of being inspired, and acknowledges that he is beside himself when he is performing; — his eyes rain tears and his hair stands on end. Socrates is of opinion that a man must be mad who behaves in this way at a festival when he is surrounded by his friends and there is nothing to trouble him. Ion is confident that Socrates would never think him mad if he could only hear his embellishments of Homer. Socrates asks whether he can speak well about everything in Homer. 'Yes, indeed he can.' 'What about things 537
of which he has no knowledge?' Ion answers that he can interpret anything in Homer. But, rejoins Socrates, when Homer speaks of the arts, as for example, of chariot-driving, or of medicine, or of prophecy, or of navigation — will he, or will the charioteer or physician or prophet or pilot be the better judge? Ion is compelled to admit that every man will judge of his own particular art better than the rhapsode. He still 541
maintains, however, that he understands the art of the general as well as any one. 'Then why in this city of Athens, in which men of merit are always being sought after, is he not at once appointed a general?' Ion replies that he is a foreigner, and the Athenians and Spartans will not appoint a foreigner to be their general. 'No, that is not the real reason; there are many

examples to the contrary. But Ion has long been playing tricks with the argument; like Proteus, he transforms himself into a variety of shapes, and is at last about to run away in the disguise
542 of a general. Would he rather be regarded as inspired or dishonest?' Ion, who has no suspicion of the irony of Socrates, eagerly embraces the alternative of inspiration.

Ion. ANALYSIS.

The Ion, like the other earlier Platonic Dialogues, is a mixture of jest and earnest, in which no definite result is obtained, but some Socratic or Platonic truths are allowed dimly to appear.

INTRODUCTION.

The elements of a true theory of poetry are contained in the notion that the poet is inspired. Genius is often said to be unconscious, or spontaneous, or a gift of nature: that 'genius is akin to madness' is a popular aphorism of modern times. The greatest strength is observed to have an element of limitation. Sense or passion are too much for the 'dry light' of intelligence which mingles with them and becomes discoloured by them. Imagination is often at war with reason and fact. The concentration of the mind on a single object, or on a single aspect of human nature, overpowers the orderly perception of the whole. Yet the feelings too bring truths home to the minds of many who in the way of reason would be incapable of understanding them. Reflections of this kind may have been passing before Plato's mind when he describes the poet as inspired, or when, as in the Apology (22 B foll.), he speaks of poets as the worst critics of their own writings—anybody taken at random from the crowd is a better interpreter of them than they are of themselves. They are sacred persons, 'winged and holy things' who have a touch of madness in their composition (Phaedr. 245 A), and should be treated with every sort of respect (Rep. iii. 398 A), but not allowed to live in a well-ordered state. Like the Statesmen in the Meno (p. 99), they have a divine instinct, but they are narrow and confused; they do not attain to the clearness of ideas, or to the knowledge of poetry or of any other art as a whole.

In the Protagoras (316 D foll.) the ancient poets are recognized by Protagoras himself as the original sophists; and this family resemblance may be traced in the Ion. The rhapsode belongs to the realm of imitation and of opinion: he professes to have all knowledge, which is derived by him from Homer, just as the

Ion.

INTRODUCTION.

sophist professes to have all wisdom, which is contained in his art of rhetoric. Even more than the sophist he is incapable of appreciating the commonest logical distinctions; he cannot explain the nature of his own art; his great memory contrasts with his inability to follow the steps of the argument. And in his highest moments of inspiration he has an eye to his own gains (535 E).

The old quarrel between philosophy and poetry, which in the Republic leads to their final separation, is already working in the mind of Plato, and is embodied by him in the contrast between Socrates and Ion. Yet here, as in the Republic, Socrates shows a sympathy with the poetic nature. Also, the manner in which Ion is affected by his own recitations affords a lively illustration of the power which, in the Republic (iii. 394), Socrates attributes to dramatic performances over the mind of the performer. His allusion to his embellishments of Homer, in which he declares himself to have surpassed Metrodorus of Lampsacus and Stesimbrotus of Thasos, seems to show that, like them, he belonged to the allegorical school of interpreters. The circumstance that nothing more is known of him may be adduced in confirmation of the argument that this truly Platonic little work is not a forgery of later times.

ION.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES. ION.

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

Socrates meets Ion the Rhapsode.

Steph. 530 *Socrates.* WELCOME, Ion. Are you from your native city of Ephesus?

Ion. No, Socrates; but from Epidaurus, where I attended the festival of Asclepius.

Soc. And do the Epidaurians have contests of rhapsodes at the festival?

Ion. O yes; and of all sorts of musical performers.

Soc. And were you one of the competitors — and did you succeed?

Ion. I obtained the first prize of all, Socrates.

Soc. Well done; and I hope that you will do the same for us at the Panathenaea.

Ion. And I will, please heaven.

How enviable is the profession of a rhapsode! He is always finely dressed and he lives in good company among poets, of whom he is the interpreter to men.

Soc. I often envy the profession of a rhapsode, Ion; for you have always to wear fine clothes, and to look as beautiful as you can is a part of your art. Then, again, you are obliged to be continually in the company of many good poets; and especially of Homer, who is the best and most divine of them; and to understand him, and not merely learn his words by rote, is a thing greatly to be envied. And no man can be a rhapsode who does not understand the meaning of the poet. For the rhapsode ought to interpret the mind of the poet to his hearers, but how can he interpret him well unless he knows what he means? All this is greatly to be envied.

Ion. Very true, Socrates; interpretation has certainly been the most laborious part of my art; and I believe myself able

Ion. to speak about Homer better than any man; and that neither Metrodorus of Lampsacus, nor Stesimbrotus of Thasos, nor Glaucon, nor any one else who ever was, had as good ideas about Homer as I have, or as many.

SOCRATES, ION.

Ion devotes himself to the exclusive interpretation of Homer.

Soc. I am glad to hear you say so, Ion; I see that you will not refuse to acquaint me with them.

Ion. Certainly, Socrates; and you really ought to hear how exquisitely I render Homer. I think that the Homeridae should give me a golden crown.

Soc. I shall take an opportunity of hearing your embellishments of him at some other time. But just now I should like to ask you a question: Does your art extend to Hesiod and Archilochus, or to Homer only?

Ion. To Homer only; he is in himself quite enough.

Soc. Are there any things about which Homer and Hesiod agree?

Ion. Yes; in my opinion there are a good many.

Soc. And can you interpret better what Homer says, or what Hesiod says, about these matters in which they agree?

Ion. I can interpret them equally well, Socrates, where they agree.

Soc. But what about matters in which they do not agree?—for example, about divination, of which both Homer and Hesiod have something to say,—

Ion. Very true:

Soc. Would you or a good prophet be a better interpreter of what these two poets say about divination, not only when they agree, but when they disagree?

Ion. A prophet.

Soc. And if you were a prophet, would you not be able to interpret them when they disagree as well as when they agree?

Ion. Clearly.

Soc. But how did you come to have this skill about Homer only, and not about Hesiod or the other poets? Does not Homer speak of the same themes which all other poets handle? Is not war his great argument? and does he not speak of human society and of intercourse of men, good and bad, skilled and unskilled, and of the gods conversing with one another and with mankind, and about what happens in

heaven and in the world below, and the generations of gods and heroes? Are not these the themes of which Homer sings?

Ion. Very true, Socrates.

Soc. And do not the other poets sing of the same?

Ion. Yes, Socrates; but not in the same way as Homer.

Soc. What, in a worse way?

Ion. Yes, in a far worse.

Soc. And Homer in a better way?

Ion. He is incomparably better.

Soc. And yet surely, my dear friend Ion, in a discussion about arithmetic, where many people are speaking, and one speaks better than the rest, there is somebody who can judge which of them is the good speaker?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And he who judges of the good will be the same as he who judges of the bad speakers?

Ion. The same.

Soc. And he will be the arithmetician?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Well, and in discussions about the wholesomeness of food, when many persons are speaking, and one speaks better than the rest, will he who recognizes the better speaker be a different person from him who recognizes the worse, or the same?

Ion. Clearly the same.

Soc. And who is he, and what is his name?

Ion. The physician.

Soc. And speaking generally, in all discussions in which the subject is the same and many men are speaking, will not
32 he who knows the good know the bad speaker also? For if he does not know the bad, neither will he know the good when the same topic is being discussed.

Ion. True.

Soc. Is not the same person skilful in both?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And you say that Homer and the other poets, such as Hesiod and Archilochus, speak of the same things, although not in the same way; but the one speaks well and the other not so well?

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

But Socrates argues that he who knows Homer, who is the better, will know Archilochus and Hesiod, who are the inferiors.

Ion. *Ion.* Yes; and I am right in saying so.

SOCRATES, ION. *Soc.* And if you knew the good speaker, you would also know the inferior speakers to be inferior?

Ion. That is true.

Soc. Then, my dear friend, can I be mistaken in saying that Ion is equally skilled in Homer and in other poets, since he himself acknowledges that the same person will be a good judge of all those who speak of the same things; and that almost all poets do speak of the same things?

'Why then is Ion all alive when Homer is spoken of, but goes to sleep at the mention of any other poet?'— Because he has no knowledge of poetry as a whole.

Ion. Why then, Socrates, do I lose attention and go to sleep and have absolutely no ideas of the least value, when any one speaks of any other poet; but when Homer is mentioned, I wake up at once and am all attention and have plenty to say?

Soc. The reason, my friend, is obvious. No one can fail to see that you speak of Homer without any art or knowledge. If you were able to speak of him by rules of art, you would have been able to speak of all other poets; for poetry is a whole.

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And when any one acquires any other art as a whole, the same may be said of them. Would you like me to explain my meaning, Ion?

Ion. Yes, indeed, Socrates; I very much wish that you would: for I love to hear you wise men talk.

Soc. O that we were wise, Ion, and that you could truly call us so; but you rhapsodes and actors, and the poets whose verses you sing, are wise; whereas I am a common man, who only speak the truth. For consider what a very commonplace and trivial thing is this which I have said — a thing which any man might say: that when a man has acquired a knowledge of a whole art, the enquiry into good and bad is one and the same. Let us consider this matter; is not the art of painting a whole?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And there are and have been many painters good and bad?

Ion. Yes.

The analogy of the other arts.

Soc. And did you ever know any one who was skilful in pointing out the excellences and defects of Polygnotus the

533 son of Aglaophon, but incapable of criticizing other painters; and when the work of any other painter was produced, went to sleep and was at a loss, and had no ideas; but when he had to give his opinion about Polygnotus, or whoever the painter might be, and about him only, woke up and was attentive and had plenty to say?

Ion. No indeed, I have never known such a person.

Soc. Or did you ever know of any one in sculpture, who was skilful in expounding the merits of Daedalus the son of Metion, or of Epeius the son of Panopeus, or of Theodorus the Samian, or of any individual sculptor; but when the works of sculptors in general were produced, was at a loss and went to sleep and had nothing to say?

Ion. No indeed; no more than the other.

Soc. And if I am not mistaken, you never met with any one among flute-players or harp-players or singers to the harp or rhapsodes who was able to discourse of Olympus or Thamyras or Orpheus, or Phemius the rhapsode of Ithaca, but was at a loss when he came to speak of Ion of Ephesus, and had no notion of his merits or defects?

Ion. I cannot deny what you say, Socrates. Nevertheless I am conscious in my own self, and the world agrees with me in thinking that I do speak better and have more to say about Homer than any other man. But I do not speak equally well about others — tell me the reason of this.

Soc. I perceive, Ion; and I will proceed to explain to you what I imagine to be the reason of this. The gift which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you, like that contained in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, but which is commonly known as the stone of Heraclea. This stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other rings; and sometimes you may see a number of pieces of iron and rings suspended from one another so as to form quite a long chain: and all of them derive their power of suspension from the original stone. In like manner the Muse first of all inspires men herself; and from these inspired persons a chain of other persons is suspended, who take the inspiration. For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful

Ion.

Socrates, Ion.

The gift of speaking well about Homer is an inspiration which exercises a magnetic power. All good poets are inspired.

Ion. poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed.

SOCRATES, ION. And as the Corybantian revellers when they dance are not in 534
their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains: but when falling under the power of music and metre they are inspired and possessed; like Bacchic maidens who draw milk and honey from the rivers when they are under the influence of Dionysus but not when they are in their right mind. And the soul of the lyric poet does the same, as they themselves say; for they tell us that they bring songs from honeyed fountains, culling them out of the gardens and dells of the Muses; they, like the bees, winging their way from flower to flower. And this is true. For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles. Many are the noble words in which poets speak concerning the actions of men; but like yourself when speaking about Homer, they do not speak of them by any rules of art: they are simply inspired to utter that to which the Muse impels them, and that only; and when inspired, one of them will make dithyrambs, another hymns of praise, another choral strains, another epic or iambic verses — and he who is good at one is not good at any other kind of verse: for not by art does the poet sing, but by power divine. Had he learned by rules of art, he would have known how to speak not of one theme only, but of all; and therefore God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker, and that through them he is conversing with us. And Tynnichus the Chalcidian affords a striking instance of what I am saying: he wrote nothing that any one would care to remember but the famous paean which is in every one's mouth, one of the finest poems ever written, simply an invention of the Muses, as he himself says. For in this way the God would seem to indicate to us and not allow us to doubt that these beautiful poems are not human, or the work of man, but divine and the

They have no rules of art, and are therefore unable to utter strains of more than one kind.

Tynnichus composed a single poem only.

work of God; and that the poets are only the interpreters of the Gods by whom they are severally possessed. Was not this the lesson which the God intended to teach when by the mouth of the worst of poets he sang the best of songs? Am I not right, Ion?

Ion. Yes, indeed, Socrates, I feel that you are; for your words touch my soul, and I am persuaded that good poets by a divine inspiration interpret the things of the Gods to us.

Soc. And you rhapsodists are the interpreters of the poets?

Ion. There again you are right.

Soc. Then you are the interpreters of interpreters?

Ion. Precisely.

Soc. I wish you would frankly tell me, Ion, what I am going to ask of you: When you produce the greatest effect upon the audience in the recitation of some striking passage, such as the apparition of Odysseus leaping forth on the floor, recognized by the suitors and casting his arrows at his feet, or the description of Achilles rushing at Hector, or the sorrows of Andromache, Hecuba, or Priam,—are you in your right mind? Are you not carried out of yourself, and does not your soul in an ecstasy seem to be among the persons or places of which you are speaking, whether they are in Ithaca or in Troy or whatever may be the scene of the poem?

Ion. That proof strikes home to me, Socrates. For I must frankly confess that at the tale of pity my eyes are filled with tears, and when I speak of horrors, my hair stands on end and my heart throbs.

Soc. Well, Ion, and what are we to say of a man who at a sacrifice or festival, when he is dressed in holiday attire, and has golden crowns upon his head, of which nobody has robbed him, appears weeping or panic-stricken in the presence of more than twenty thousand friendly faces, when there is no one despoiling or wronging him;—is he in his right mind or is he not?

Ion. No indeed, Socrates, I must say that, strictly speaking, he is not in his right mind.

Soc. And are you aware that you produce similar effects on most of the spectators?

Ion. Only too well; for I look down upon them from the stage, and behold the various emotions of pity, wonder, stern-

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

Ion himself is not in his right mind when he produces the greatest effect.

Ion. ness, stamped upon their countenances when I am speaking:

SOCRATES, ION. and I am obliged to give my very best attention to them; for if I make them cry I myself shall laugh, and if I make them laugh I myself shall cry when the time of payment arrives.

Soc. Do you know that the spectator is the last of the rings which, as I am saying, receive the power of the original magnet from one another? The rhapsode like yourself and the actor are intermediate links, and the poet himself is the first of them. Through all these the God sways the souls of men in any direction which he pleases, and makes one man hang down from another. Thus there is a vast chain of dancers and masters and under-masters of choruses, who are suspended, as if from the stone, at the side of the rings which hang down from the Muse. And every poet has some Muse from whom he is suspended, and by whom he is said to be possessed, which is nearly the same thing; for he is taken hold of. And from these first rings, which are the poets, depend others, some deriving their inspiration from Orpheus, others from Musaeus; but the greater number are possessed and held by Homer. Of whom, Ion, you are one, and are possessed by Homer; and when any one repeats the words of another poet you go to sleep, and know not what to say; but when any one recites a strain of Homer you wake up in a moment, and your soul leaps within you, and you have plenty to say; for not by art or knowledge about Homer do you say what you say, but by divine inspiration and by possession; just as the Corybantian revellers too have a quick perception of that strain only which is appropriated to the God by whom they are possessed, and have plenty of dances and words for that, but take no heed of any other. And you, Ion, when the name of Homer is mentioned have plenty to say, and have nothing to say of others. You ask, 'Why is this?' The answer is that you praise Homer not by art but by divine inspiration.

The rings which hang from the Muse.

Ion. That is good, Socrates; and yet I doubt whether you will ever have eloquence enough to persuade me that I praise Homer only when I am mad and possessed; and if you could hear me speak of him I am sure you would never think this to be the case.

Soc. I should like very much to hear you, but not until

you have answered a question which I have to ask. On what part of Homer do you speak well? — not surely about every part.

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

Ion. There is no part, Socrates, about which I do not speak well: of that I can assure you.

Ion knows every part of Homer.

Soc. Surely not about things in Homer of which you have no knowledge?

Ion. And what is there in Homer of which I have no knowledge?

Soc. Why, does not Homer speak in many passages about
537 arts? For example, about driving; if I can only remember the lines I will repeat them.

Ion. I remember, and will repeat them.

Soc. Tell me then, what Nestor says to Antilochus, his son, where he bids him be careful of the turn at the horse-race in honour of Patroclus.

Ion. 'Bend gently,' he says, 'in the polished chariot to the left of them, and urge the horse on the right hand with whip and voice; and slacken the rein. And when you are at the goal, let the left horse draw near, yet so that the nave of the well-wrought wheel may not even seem to touch the extremity; and avoid catching the stone[1].'

Soc. Enough. Now, Ion, will the charioteer or the physician be the better judge of the propriety of these lines?

Ion. The charioteer, clearly.

Soc. And will the reason be that this is his art, or will there be any other reason?

Ion. No, that will be the reason.

Soc. And every art is appointed by God to have knowledge of a certain work; for that which we know by the art of the pilot we do not know by the art of medicine?

Ion. Certainly not.

Soc. Nor do we know by the art of the carpenter that which we know by the art of medicine?

Ion. Certainly not.

Soc. And this is true of all the arts; — that which we know with one art we do not know with the other? But let me ask a prior question: You admit that there are differences of arts?

[1] Il. xxiii. 335.

Ion. *Ion.* Yes.

SOCRATES, ION. *Soc.* You would argue, as I should, that when one art is of one kind of knowledge and another of another, they are different?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Yes, surely; for if the subject of knowledge were the same, there would be no meaning in saying that the arts were different,— if they both gave the same knowledge. For example, I know that here are five fingers, and you know the same. And if I were to ask whether I and you became acquainted with this fact by the help of the same art of arithmetic, you would acknowledge that we did?

Ion. Yes.

Every art has a distinct subject; and he who has no knowledge of an art can form no judgment of it.

Soc. Tell me, then, what I was intending to ask you,— whether this holds universally? Must the same art have the same subject of knowledge, and different arts other subjects of knowledge? 53

Ion. That is my opinion, Socrates.

Soc. Then he who has no knowledge of a particular art will have no right judgment of the sayings and doings of that art?

Ion. Very true.

Soc. Then which will be a better judge of the lines which you were reciting from Homer, you or the charioteer?

Ion. The charioteer.

Soc. Why, yes, because you are a rhapsode and not a charioteer.

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And the art of the rhapsode is different from that of the charioteer?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And if a different knowledge, then a knowledge of different matters?

Ion. True.

Soc. You know the passage in which Hecamede, the concubine of Nestor, is described as giving to the wounded Machaon a posset, as he says,

'Made with Pramnian wine; and she grated cheese of goat's milk with a grater of bronze, and at his side placed an onion which gives a relish to drink[1].'

[1] Il. xi. 638, 630.

Now would you say that the art of the rhapsode or the art of medicine was better able to judge of the propriety of these lines?

Ion. The art of medicine.

Soc. And when Homer says,

'And she descended into the deep like a leaden plummet, which, set in the horn of ox that ranges in the fields, rushes along carrying death among the ravenous fishes [1],'—

will the art of the fisherman or of the rhapsode be better able to judge whether these lines are rightly expressed or not?

Ion. Clearly, Socrates, the art of the fisherman.

Soc. Come now, suppose that you were to say to me: 'Since you, Socrates, are able to assign different passages in Homer to their corresponding arts, I wish that you would tell me what are the passages of which the excellence ought to be judged by the prophet and prophetic art'; and you will see how readily and truly I shall answer you. For there are many such passages, particularly in the Odyssee; as, for example, the passage in which Theoclymenus the prophet of the house of Melampus says to the suitors:—

539 'Wretched men! what is happening to you? Your heads and your faces and your limbs underneath are shrouded in night; and the voice of lamentation bursts forth, and your cheeks are wet with tears. And the vestibule is full, and the court is full, of ghosts descending into the darkness of Erebus, and the sun has perished out of heaven, and an evil mist is spread abroad [2].'

And there are many such passages in the Iliad also; as for example in the description of the battle near the rampart, where he says:—

'As they were eager to pass the ditch, there came to them an omen: a soaring eagle, holding back the people on the left, bore a huge bloody dragon in his talons, still living and panting; nor had he yet resigned the strife, for he bent back and smote the bird which carried him on the breast by the neck, and he in pain let him fall from him to the ground into the midst of the multitude. And the eagle, with a cry, was borne afar on the wings of the wind [3].'

These are the sort of things which I should say that the prophet ought to consider and determine.

Ion. And you are quite right, Socrates, in saying so.

Soc. Yes, Ion, and you are right also. And as I have

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

For example, the rhapsode can form no judgment of the art of medicine, or of the fisherman's or of the prophetic art.

[1] Il. xxiv. 80. [2] Od. xx. 351. [3] Il. xii. 200.

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

selected from the Iliad and Odyssee for you passages which describe the office of the prophet and the physician and the fisherman, do you, who know Homer so much better than I do, Ion, select for me passages which relate to the rhapsode and the rhapsode's art, and which the rhapsode ought to examine and judge of better than other men.

Ion. All passages, I should say, Socrates.

Soc. Not all, Ion, surely. Have you already forgotten what you were saying? A rhapsode ought to have a better memory.

Ion. Why, what am I forgetting? 540

Soc. Do you not remember that you declared the art of the rhapsode to be different from the art of the charioteer?

Ion. Yes, I remember.

Soc. And you admitted that being different they would have different subjects of knowledge?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Then upon your own showing the rhapsode, and the art of the rhapsode, will not know everything?

Ion. I should exclude certain things, Socrates.

Soc. You mean to say that you would exclude pretty much the subjects of the other arts. As he does not know all of them, which of them will he know?

Ion is still of opinion that the rhapsode can form a better general judgment of the proprieties of character:

Ion. He will know what a man and what a woman ought to say, and what a freeman and what a slave ought to say, and what a ruler and what a subject.

Soc. Do you mean that a rhapsode will know better than the pilot what the ruler of a sea-tossed vessel ought to say?

Ion. No; the pilot will know best.

Soc. Or will the rhapsode know better than the physician what the ruler of a sick man ought to say?

Ion. He will not.

Soc. But he will know what a slave ought to say?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. Suppose the slave to be a cowherd; the rhapsode will know better than the cowherd what he ought to say in order to soothe the infuriated cows?

Ion. No, he will not.

Soc. But he will know what a spinning-woman ought to say about the working of wool?

Ion. No.

Soc. At any rate he will know what a general ought to say when exhorting his soldiers?

Ion. Yes, that is the sort of thing which the rhapsode will be sure to know.

Soc. Well, but is the art of the rhapsode the art of the general?

Ion. I am sure that I should know what a general ought to say.

Soc. Why, yes, Ion, because you may possibly have a knowledge of the art of the general as well as of the rhapsode; and you may also have a knowledge of horsemanship as well as of the lyre: and then you would know when horses were well or ill managed. But suppose I were to ask you: By the help of which art, Ion, do you know whether horses are well managed, by your skill as a horseman or as a performer on the lyre — what would you answer?

Ion. I should reply, by my skill as a horseman.

Soc. And if you judged of performers on the lyre, you would admit that you judged of them as a performer on the lyre, and not as a horseman?

Ion. Yes.

Soc. And in judging of the general's art, do you judge of it as a general or a rhapsode?

Ion. To me there appears to be no difference between them.

541 *Soc.* What do you mean? Do you mean to say that the art of the rhapsode and of the general is the same?

Ion. Yes, one and the same.

Soc. Then he who is a good rhapsode is also a good general?

Ion. Certainly, Socrates.

Soc. And he who is a good general is also a good rhapsode?

Ion. No; I do not say that.

Soc. But you do say that he who is a good rhapsode is also a good general.

Ion. Certainly.

Soc. And you are the best of Hellenic rhapsodes?

Ion. Far the best, Socrates.

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

not of what a slave or a cowherd ought to say, but of what a general ought to say, and accidentally of what the professors of other arts would say.

Ion is made to admit that he, being the best of rhapsodes, is also the best of generals.

Ion. *Soc.* And are you the best general, Ion?

SOCRATES, ION. *Ion.* To be sure, Socrates; and Homer was my master.

But why then is he not employed? *Soc.* But then, Ion, what in the name of goodness can be the reason why you, who are the best of generals as well as the best of rhapsodes in all Hellas, go about as a rhapsode when you might be a general? Do you think that the Hellenes want a rhapsode with his golden crown, and do not want a general?

Ion. Why, Socrates, the reason is, that my countrymen, the Ephesians, are the servants and soldiers of Athens, and do not need a general; and you and Sparta are not likely to have me, for you think that you have enough generals of your own.

Soc. My good Ion, did you never hear of Apollodorus of Cyzicus?

Ion. Who may he be?

Soc. One who, though a foreigner, has often been chosen their general by the Athenians: and there is Phanosthenes of Andros, and Heraclides of Clazomenae, whom they have also appointed to the command of their armies and to other offices, although aliens, after they had shown their merit. And will they not choose Ion the Ephesian to be their general, and honour him, if he prove himself worthy? Were not the Ephesians originally Athenians, and Ephesus is no mean city? But, indeed, Ion, if you are correct in saying that by art and knowledge you are able to praise Homer, you do not deal fairly with me, and after all your professions of knowing many glorious things about Homer, and promises that you would exhibit them, you are only a deceiver, and so far from exhibiting the art of which you are a master, will not, even after my repeated entreaties, explain to me the nature of it. You have literally as many forms as Proteus; and now you go all manner of ways, twisting and turning, and, like Proteus, become all manner of people at once, and at last slip away from me in the disguise of a general, in order that you may escape exhibiting your Homeric lore. And if 542
you have art, then, as I was saying, in falsifying your promise that you would exhibit Homer, you are not dealing fairly with me. But if, as I believe, you have no art, but speak all these beautiful words about Homer unconsciously under his

Ion is either a rogue, or he is an inspired person.

inspiring influence, then I acquit you of dishonesty, and shall only say that you are inspired. Which do you prefer to be thought, dishonest or inspired?

Ion.

SOCRATES, ION.

Ion. There is a great difference, Socrates, between the two alternatives; and inspiration is by far the nobler.

Ion accepts the latter of the two alternatives.

Soc. Then, Ion, I shall assume the nobler alternative; and attribute to you in your praises of Homer inspiration, and not art.

SYMPOSIUM.

INTRODUCTION.

OF all the works of Plato the Symposium is the most perfect in form, and may be truly thought to contain more than any commentator has ever dreamed of; or, as Goethe said of one of his own writings, more than the author himself knew. For in philosophy as in prophecy glimpses of the future may often be conveyed in words which could hardly have been understood or interpreted at the time when they were uttered (cp. Symp. 210 foll., 223 D)—which were wiser than the writer of them meant, and could not have been explained by him if he had been interrogated about them. Yet Plato was not a mystic, nor in any degree affected by the Eastern influences which afterwards overspread the Alexandrian world. He was not an enthusiast or a sentimentalist, but one who aspired only to see reasoned truth, and whose thoughts are clearly expressed in his language. There is no foreign element either of Egypt or of Asia to be found in his writings. And more than any other Platonic work the Symposium is Greek both in style and subject, having a beauty 'as of a statue,' while the companion Dialogue of the Phaedrus is marked by a sort of Gothic irregularity. More too than in any other of his Dialogues, Plato is emancipated from former philosophies. The genius of Greek art seems to triumph over the traditions of Pythagorean, Eleatic, or Megarian systems, and 'the old quarrel of poetry and philosophy' has at least a superficial reconcilement. (Rep. x. 607 B.)

ANALYSIS.

Steph. 172 An unknown person who had heard of the discourses in praise of love spoken by Socrates and others at the banquet of Agathon is desirous of having an authentic account of them, which he thinks that he can obtain from Apollodorus, the same excitable,

or rather 'mad' friend of Socrates, who is afterwards introduced in the Phaedo. He had imagined that the discourses were 173
recent. There he is entirely mistaken: but they are still fresh in the memory of his informant, who had just been repeating them to Glaucon, and is quite prepared to have another rehearsal of them in a walk from the Piraeus to Athens. Although he had not been present himself, he had heard them from the best authority. Aristodemus, who is described as having been in past times a humble but inseparable attendant of Socrates, had reported them to him (cp. Xen. Mem. i. 4).

The narrative which he had heard was as follows: —

Aristodemus meeting Socrates in holiday attire, is invited by 174
him to a banquet at the house of Agathon, who had been sacrificing in thanksgiving for his tragic victory on the day previous. But no sooner has he entered the house than he finds that he is alone; Socrates has stayed behind in a fit of abstraction, 175
and does not appear until the banquet is half over. On his appearing he and the host jest a little; the question is then 176
asked by Pausanias, one of the guests, 'What shall they do about drinking? as they had been all well drunk on the day before, and drinking on two successive days is such a bad thing.' This is confirmed by the authority of Eryximachus the physician, who 177
further proposes that instead of listening to the flute-girl and her 'noise' they shall make speeches in honour of love, one after another, going from left to right in the order in which they are reclining at the table. All of them agree to this proposal, and Phaedrus, who is the 'father' of the idea, which he has previously communicated to Eryximachus, begins as follows: —

He descants first of all upon the antiquity of love, which is 178
proved by the authority of the poets; secondly upon the benefits which love gives to man. The greatest of these is the sense of honour and dishonour. The lover is ashamed to be seen by the beloved doing or suffering any cowardly or mean act. And a 179
state or army which was made up only of lovers and their loves would be invincible. For love will convert the veriest coward into an inspired hero.

And there have been true loves not only of men but of women also. Such was the love of Alcestis, who dared to die for her husband, and in recompense of her virtue was allowed to come

again from the dead. But Orpheus, the miserable harper, who went down to Hades alive, that he might bring back his wife, was mocked with an apparition only, and the gods afterwards contrived his death as the punishment of his cowardliness. The love of Achilles, like that of Alcestis, was courageous and true; for he was willing to avenge his lover Patroclus, although he knew that
180 his own death would immediately follow: and the gods, who honour the love of the beloved above that of the lover, rewarded him, and sent him to the islands of the blest.

Pausanias, who was sitting next, then takes up the tale: — He says that Phaedrus should have distinguished the heavenly love from the earthly, before he praised either. For there are two loves, as there are two Aphrodites — one the daughter of Uranus, who has no mother and is the elder and wiser goddess, and the other, the daughter of Zeus and Dione, who is popular and com-
181 mon. The first of the two loves has a noble purpose, and delights only in the intelligent nature of man, and is faithful to the end, and has no shadow of wantonness or lust. The second is the coarser kind of love, which is a love of the body rather than of the
182 soul, and is of women and boys as well as of men. Now the actions of lovers vary, like every other sort of action, according to the manner of their performance. And in different countries there is a difference of opinion about male loves. Some, like the Boeotians, approve of them; others, like the Ionians, and most of the barbarians, disapprove of them; partly because they are aware of the political dangers which ensue from them, as may be seen in the instance of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. At Athens and Sparta there is an apparent contradiction about them. For at times they are encouraged, and then the lover is allowed
183 to play all sorts of fantastic tricks; he may swear and forswear himself (and 'at lovers' perjuries they say Jove laughs'); he may be a servant, and lie on a mat at the door of his love, without any loss of character; but there are also times when elders look grave and guard their young relations, and personal remarks are made. The truth is that some of these loves are disgraceful and
184 others honourable. The vulgar love of the body which takes wing and flies away when the bloom of youth is over, is disgraceful, and so is the interested love of power or wealth; but the love of the noble mind is lasting. The lover should be

tested, and the beloved should not be too ready to yield. The rule in our country is that the beloved may do the same service to the lover in the way of virtue which the lover may do to him.

A voluntary service to be rendered for the sake of virtue and wisdom is permitted among us; and when these two customs — one the love of youth, the other the practice of virtue and philosophy — meet in one, then the lovers may lawfully unite. Nor is 185
there any disgrace to a disinterested lover in being deceived: but the interested lover is doubly disgraced, for if he loses his love he loses his character; whereas the noble love of the other remains the same, although the object of his love is unworthy: for nothing can be nobler than love for the sake of virtue. This is that love of the heavenly goddess which is of great price to individuals and cities, making them work together for their improvement.

The turn of Aristophanes comes next; but he has the hiccough, and therefore proposes that Eryximachus the physician shall cure him or speak in his turn. Eryximachus is ready to do both, and after prescribing for the hiccough, speaks as follows:— 186

He agrees with Pausanias in maintaining that there are two kinds of love; but his art has led him to the further conclusion that the empire of this double love extends over all things, and is to be found in animals and plants as well as in man. In the human body also there are two loves; and the art of medicine shows which is the good and which is the bad love, and persuades the body to accept the good and reject the bad, and reconciles 187
conflicting elements and makes them friends. Every art, gymnastic and husbandry as well as medicine, is the reconciliation of opposites; and this is what Heracleitus meant, when he spoke of a harmony of opposites: but in strictness he should rather have spoken of a harmony which succeeds opposites, for an agreement of disagreements there cannot be. Music too is concerned with the principles of love in their application to harmony and rhythm. In the abstract, all is simple, and we are not troubled with the twofold love; but when they are applied in education with their accompaniments of song and metre, then the discord begins. Then the old tale has to be repeated of fair Urania and the coarse Polyhymnia, who must be indulged sparingly, just as in my own art of medicine care must be taken that the taste of the epicure

be gratified without inflicting upon him the attendant penalty of disease.

188 There is a similar harmony or disagreement in the course of the seasons and in the relations of moist and dry, hot and cold, hoar frost and blight; and diseases of all sorts spring from the excesses or disorders of the element of love. The knowledge of these elements of love and discord in the heavenly bodies is termed astronomy, in the relations of men towards gods and parents is called divination. For divination is the peacemaker of gods and men, and works by a knowledge of the tendencies of merely human loves to piety and impiety. Such is the power of love; and that love which is just and temperate has the greatest power, and is the source of all our happiness and friendship with the gods and with one another. I dare say that I have omitted to 189 mention many things which you, Aristophanes, may supply, as I perceive that you are cured of the hiccough.

Aristophanes is the next speaker:—

He professes to open a new vein of discourse, in which he begins by treating of the origin of human nature. The sexes were originally three, men, women, and the union of the two; and they were made round — having four hands, four feet, two 190 faces on a round neck, and the rest to correspond. Terrible was their strength and swiftness; and they were essaying to scale heaven and attack the gods. Doubt reigned in the celestial councils; the gods were divided between the desire of quelling the pride of man and the fear of losing the sacrifices. At last Zeus hit upon an expedient. Let us cut them in two, he said; then they will only have half their strength, and we shall have twice as many sacrifices. He spake, and split them as you might split an egg with an hair; and when this was done, he told Apollo to give their faces a twist and re-arrange their persons, taking out 191 the wrinkles and tying the skin in a knot about the navel. The two halves went about looking for one another, and were ready to die of hunger in one another's arms. Then Zeus invented an adjustment of the sexes, which enabled them to marry and go their way to the business of life. Now the characters of men differ accordingly as they are derived from the original man or the original woman, or the original man-woman. Those who come from the man-woman are lascivious and adulterous; those

who come from the woman form female attachments; those who 192
are a section of the male follow the male and embrace him, and in
him all their desires centre. The pair are inseparable and live
together in pure and manly affection; yet they cannot tell what
they want of one another. But if Hephaestus were to come to
them with his instruments and propose that they should be
melted into one and remain one here and hereafter, they would
acknowledge that this was the very expression of their want.
For love is the desire of the whole, and the pursuit of the whole
is called love. There was a time when the two sexes were 193
only one, but now God has halved them,— much as the Lacedae-
monians have cut up the Arcadians,— and if they do not behave
themselves he will divide them again, and they will hop
about with half a nose and face in basso relievo. Wherefore let
us exhort all men to piety, that we may obtain the goods of which
love is the author, and be reconciled to God, and find our own
true loves, which rarely happens in this world. And now I must
beg you not to suppose that I am alluding to Pausanias and
Agathon (cp. Protag. 315 E), for my words refer to all mankind
everywhere.

Some raillery ensues first between Aristophanes and Eryxi-
machus, and then between Agathon, who fears a few select 194
friends more than any number of spectators at the theatre, and
Socrates, who is disposed to begin an argument. This is speedily
repressed by Phaedrus, who reminds the disputants of their
tribute to the god. Agathon's speech follows: —

He will speak of the god first and then of his gifts: He is 195
the fairest and blessedest and best of the gods, and also the
youngest, having had no existence in the old days of Iapetus
and Cronos when the gods were at war. The things that were
done then were done of necessity and not of love. For love is
young and dwells in soft places,— not like Ate in Homer, walking
on the skulls of men, but in their hearts and souls, which are soft
enough. He is all flexibility and grace, and his habitation is 196
among the flowers, and he cannot do or suffer wrong; for all men
serve and obey him of their own free will, and where there is
love there is obedience, and where obedience, there is justice;
for none can be wronged of his own free will. And he is tem-
perate as well as just, for he is the ruler of the desires, and if he

rules them he must be temperate. Also he is courageous, for he is the conqueror of the lord of war. And he is wise too; for he is
197 a poet, and the author of poesy in others. He created the animals; he is the inventor of the arts; all the gods are his subjects; he is the fairest and best himself, and the cause of what is fairest and best in others; he makes men to be of one mind at a banquet, filling them with affection and emptying them of disaffection; the pilot, helper, defender, saviour of men, in whose footsteps let every man follow, chanting a strain of love. Such is the dis-
198 course, half playful, half serious, which I dedicate to the god.

The turn of Socrates comes next. He begins by remarking satirically that he has not understood the terms of the original agreement, for he fancied that they meant to speak the true praises of love, but now he finds that they only say what is good
199 of him, whether true or false. He begs to be absolved from speaking falsely, but he is willing to speak the truth, and proposes to begin by questioning Agathon. The result of his questions may be summed up as follows:—

200 Love is of something, and that which love desires is not that which love is or has; for no man desires that which he is or has.
201 And love is of the beautiful, and therefore has not the beautiful. And the beautiful is the good, and therefore, in wanting and desiring the beautiful, love also wants and desires the good. Socrates professes to have asked the same questions and to have obtained the same answers from Diotima, a wise woman of Mantinea, who, like Agathon, had spoken first of love and then of his
202 works. Socrates, like Agathon, had told her that Love is a mighty god and also fair, and she had shown him in return that Love was neither, but in a mean between fair and foul, good and evil, and not a god at all, but only a great demon or intermediate power (cp. the speech of Eryximachus, 186 D) who
203 conveys to the gods the prayers of men, and to men the commands of the gods.

Socrates asks: Who are his father and mother? To this Diotima replies that he is the son of Plenty and Poverty, and partakes of the nature of both, and is full and starved by turns. Like his mother he is poor and squalid, lying on mats at doors (cp. the speech of Pausanias, 183 A); like his father he is bold and strong, and full of arts and resources. Further, he is in a

mean between ignorance and knowledge: — in this he resembles the philosopher who is also in a mean between the wise and the ignorant. Such is the nature of Love, who is not to be confused with the beloved.

But Love desires the beautiful; and then arises the question, What does he desire of the beautiful? He desires, of course, the possession of the beautiful; — but what is given by that? For the beautiful let us substitute the good, and we have no difficulty in seeing the possession of the good to be happiness, and Love to be the desire of happiness, although the meaning of the word has been too often confined to one kind of love. And Love desires not only the good, but the everlasting possession of the good. Why then is there all this flutter and excitement about love? Because all men and women at a certain age are desirous of bringing to the birth. And love is not of beauty only, but of birth in beauty; this is the principle of immortality in a mortal creature. When beauty approaches, then the conceiving power is benign and diffuse; when foulness, she is averted and morose.

But why again does this extend not only to men but also to animals? Because they too have an instinct of immortality. Even in the same individual there is a perpetual succession as well of the parts of the material body as of the thoughts and desires of the mind; nay, even knowledge comes and goes. There is no sameness of existence, but the new mortality is always taking the place of the old. This is the reason why parents love their children — for the sake of immortality; and this is why men love the immortality of fame. For the creative soul creates not children, but conceptions of wisdom and virtue, such as poets and other creators have invented. And the noblest creations of all are those of legislators, in honour of whom temples have been raised. Who would not sooner have begotten these children of the mind than the ordinary human ones?[1]

I will now initiate you, she said, into the greater mysteries; for he who would proceed in due course should love first one fair form, and then many, and learn the connexion of them; and from beautiful bodies he should proceed to beautiful minds, and

[1] Cp. Bacon's Essays, 8: — 'Certainly the best works and of greatest merit for the public have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men; which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public.'

the beauty of laws and institutions, until he perceives that all beauty is of one kindred; and from institutions he should go on to the sciences, until at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science of universal beauty, and then he will behold the everlasting nature which is the cause of all, and will be near the
211 end. In the contemplation of that supreme being of love he will be purified of earthly leaven, and will behold beauty, not with the bodily eye, but with the eye of the mind, and will bring forth true
212 creations of virtue and wisdom, and be the friend of God and heir of immortality.

Such, Phaedrus, is the tale which I heard from the stranger of Mantinea, and which you may call the encomium of love, or what you please.

The company applaud the speech of Socrates, and Aristophanes is about to say something, when a band of revellers breaks into the court, and the voice of Alcibiades is heard asking
213 for Agathon. He is led in drunk, and welcomed by Agathon, whom he has come to crown with a garland. He is placed on a couch at his side, but suddenly, on recognizing Socrates, he starts up, and a sort of conflict is carried on between them, which Agathon is requested to appease. Alcibiades then insists
214 that they shall drink, and has a large wine-cooler filled, which he first empties himself, and then fills again and passes on to Socrates. He is informed of the nature of the entertainment; and is ready to join, if only in the character of a drunken and disappointed lover he may be allowed to sing the praises of Socrates: —

215 He begins by comparing Socrates first to the busts of Silenus, which have images of the gods inside them; and, secondly, to Marsyas the flute-player. For Socrates produces the same effect with the voice which Marsyas did with the flute. He is the great
216 speaker and enchanter who ravishes the souls of men; the convincer of hearts too, as he has convinced Alcibiades, and made
217 him ashamed of his mean and miserable life. Socrates at one time seemed about to fall in love with him; and he thought that he would thereby gain a wonderful opportunity of receiving
218 lessons of wisdom. He narrates the failure of his design. He
219 has suffered agonies from him, and is at his wit's end. He then proceeds to mention some other particulars of the life of Socrates;

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how they were at Potidaea together, where Socrates showed 220
his superior powers of enduring cold and fatigue; how on one occasion he had stood for an entire day and night absorbed in reflection amid the wonder of the spectators; how on another occasion he had saved Alcibiades' life; how at the battle of Delium, after the defeat, he might be seen stalking about like 22
a pelican, rolling his eyes as Aristophanes had described him in the Clouds. He is the most wonderful of human beings, and absolutely unlike any one but a satyr. Like the satyr in his 22
language too; for he uses the commonest words as the outward mask of the divinest truths.

When Alcibiades has done speaking, a dispute begins between him and Agathon and Socrates. Socrates piques Alcibiades by a pretended affection for Agathon. Presently a band of revellers 22
appears, who introduce disorder into the feast; the sober part of the company, Eryximachus, Phaedrus, and others, withdraw; and Aristodemus, the follower of Socrates, sleeps during the whole of a long winter's night. When he wakes at cockcrow the revellers are nearly all asleep. Only Socrates, Aristophanes, and Agathon hold out; they are drinking from a large goblet, which they pass round, and Socrates is explaining to the two others, who are half-asleep, that the genius of tragedy is the same as that of comedy, and that the writer of tragedy ought to be a writer of comedy also. And first Aristophanes drops, and then, as the day is dawning, Agathon. Socrates, having laid them to rest, takes a bath and goes to his daily avocations until the evening. Aristodemus follows.

INTRODUCTION.

If it be true that there are more things in the Symposium of Plato than any commentator has dreamed of, it is also true that many things have been imagined which are not really to be found there. Some writings hardly admit of a more distinct interpretation than a musical composition; and every reader may form his own accompaniment of thought or feeling to the strain which he hears. The Symposium of Plato is a work of this character, and can with difficulty be rendered in any words but the writer's own. There are so many half-lights and cross-lights, so much of the colour of mythology, and of the manner of sophistry adhering — rhetoric and poetry, the playful and the

serious, are so subtly intermingled in it, and vestiges of old philosophy so curiously blend with germs of future knowledge, that agreement among interpreters is not to be expected. The expression 'poema magis putandum quam comicorum poetarum,' which has been applied to all the writings of Plato, is especially applicable to the Symposium.

The power of love is represented in the Symposium as running through all nature and all being: at one end descending to animals and plants, and attaining to the highest vision of truth at the other. In an age when man was seeking for an expression of the world around him, the conception of love greatly affected him. One of the first distinctions of language and of mythology was that of gender; and at a later period the ancient physicist, anticipating modern science, saw, or thought that he saw, a sex in plants; there were elective affinities among the elements, marriages of earth and heaven. (Aesch. Frag. Dan. 38.) Love became a mythic personage, whom philosophy, borrowing from poetry, converted into an efficient cause of creation. The traces of the existence of love, as of number and figure, were everywhere discerned; and in the Pythagorean list of opposites male and female were ranged side by side with odd and even, finite and infinite.

But Plato seems also to be aware that there is a mystery of love in man as well as in nature, extending beyond the mere immediate relation of the sexes. He is conscious that the highest and noblest things in the world are not easily severed from the sensual desires, or may even be regarded as a spiritualized form of them. We may observe that Socrates himself is not represented as originally unimpassioned, but as one who has overcome his passions; the secret of his power over others partly lies in his passionate but self-controlled nature. In the Phaedrus and Symposium love is not merely the feeling usually so called, but the mystical contemplation of the beautiful and the good. The same passion which may wallow in the mire is capable of rising to the loftiest heights — of penetrating the inmost secret of philosophy. The highest love is the love not of a person, but of the highest and purest abstraction. This abstraction is the far-off heaven on which the eye of the mind is fixed in fond amazement. The unity of truth, the consistency of the warring elements of the

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world, the enthusiasm for knowledge when first beaming upon mankind, the relativity of ideas to the human mind, and of the human mind to ideas, the faith in the invisible, the adoration of the eternal nature, are all included, consciously or unconsciously, in Plato's doctrine of love.

The successive speeches in praise of love are characteristic of the speakers, and contribute in various degrees to the final result; they are all designed to prepare the way for Socrates, who gathers up the threads anew, and skims the highest points of each of them. But they are not to be regarded as the stages of an idea, rising above one another to a climax. They are fanciful, partly facetious performances, 'yet also having a certain measure of seriousness' (197 E), which the successive speakers dedicate to the god. All of them are rhetorical and poetical rather than dialectical, but glimpses of truth appear in them. When Eryximachus says that the principles of music are simple in themselves, but confused in their application, he touches lightly upon a difficulty which has troubled the moderns as well as the ancients in music, and may be extended to the other applied sciences. That confusion begins in the concrete, was the natural feeling of a mind dwelling in the world of ideas. When Pausanias remarks that personal attachments are inimical to despots, the experience of Greek history confirms the truth of his remark. When Aristophanes declares that love is the desire of the whole, he expresses a feeling not unlike that of the German philosopher, who says that 'philosophy is home sickness.' When Agathon says that no man 'can be wronged of his own free will,' he is alluding playfully to a serious problem of Greek philosophy (cp. Arist. Nic. Ethics, v. 9). So naturally does Plato mingle jest and earnest, truth and opinion in the same work.

The characters — of Phaedrus, who has been the cause of more philosophical discussions than any other man, with the exception of Simmias the Theban (Phaedrus 242 B); of Aristophanes, who disguises under comic imagery a serious purpose; of Agathon, who in later life is satirized by Aristophanes in the Thesmophoriazusae, for his effeminate manners and the feeble rhythms of his verse; of Alcibiades, who is the same strange contrast of great powers and great vices, which meets us in history — are drawn to the life; and we may suppose the less-known characters

of Pausanias and Eryximachus to be also true to the traditional recollection of them (cp. Phaedr. 268 A, Protag. 315 C, D; and compare Symp. 214 B with Phaedr. 227 A). We may also remark that Aristodemus is called 'the little' in Xenophon's Memorabilia, i. 4 (cp. Symp. 173 B).

The speeches have been said to follow each other in pairs: Phaedrus and Pausanias being the ethical, Eryximachus and Aristophanes the physical speakers, while in Agathon and Socrates poetry and philosophy blend together. The speech of Phaedrus is also described as the mythological, that of Pausanias as the political, that of Eryximachus as the scientific, that of Aristophanes as the artistic (!), that of Socrates as the philosophical. But these and similar distinctions are not found in Plato; — they are the points of view of his critics, and seem to impede rather than to assist us in understanding him.

When the turn of Socrates comes round he cannot be allowed to disturb the arrangement made at first. With the leave of Phaedrus he asks a few questions, and then he throws his argument into the form of a speech (cp. Gorg. 505 E, Protag. 353 B). But his speech is really the narrative of a dialogue between himself and Diotima. And as at a banquet good manners would not allow him to win a victory either over his host or any of the guests, the superiority which he gains over Agathon is ingeniously represented as having been already gained over himself by her. The artifice has the further advantage of maintaining his accustomed profession of ignorance (cp. Menex. 236 fol.). Even his knowledge of the mysteries of love, to which he lays claim here and elsewhere (Lys. 204 C), has been imparted to him by Diotima.

The speeches are attested to us by the very best authority. The madman Apollodorus, who for three years past has made a daily study of the actions of Socrates — to whom the world is summed up in the words 'Great is Socrates' — he has heard them from another 'madman,' Aristodemus, who was the 'shadow' of Socrates in days of old, like him going about barefooted, and who had been present at the time. 'Would you desire better witness?' The extraordinary narrative of Alcibiades is ingeniously represented as admitted by Socrates, whose silence when he is invited to contradict gives consent to the narrator. We may observe, by the way, (1) how the very appearance of Aristodemus

by himself is a sufficient indication to Agathon that Socrates has been left behind; also, (2) how the courtesy of Agathon anticipates the excuse which Socrates was to have made on Aristodemus' behalf for coming uninvited; (3) how the story of the fit or trance of Socrates is confirmed by the mention which Alcibiades makes of a similar fit of abstraction occurring when he was serving with the army at Potidaea; like (4) the drinking powers of Socrates and his love of the fair, which receive a similar attestation in the concluding scene; or the attachment of Aristodemus, who is not forgotten when Socrates takes his departure. (5) We may notice the manner in which Socrates himself regards the first five speeches, not as true, but as fanciful and exaggerated encomiums of the god Love; (6) the satirical character of them, shown especially in the appeals to mythology, and in the reasons which are given by Zeus for reconstructing the frame of man, or by the Boeotians and Eleans for encouraging male loves; (7) the ruling passion of Socrates for dialectics, who will argue with Agathon instead of making a speech, and will only speak at all upon the condition that he is allowed to speak the truth. We may note also the touch of Socratic irony, (8) which admits of a wide application and reveals a deep insight into the world: — that in speaking of holy things and persons there is a general understanding that you should praise them, not that you should speak the truth about them — this is the sort of praise which Socrates is unable to give. Lastly, (9) we may remark that the banquet is a real banquet after all, at which love is the theme of discourse, and huge quantities of wine are drunk (214 A, 223 B).

The discourse of Phaedrus is half-mythical, half-ethical; and he himself, true to the character which is given him in the Dialogue bearing his name, is half-sophist, half-enthusiast. He is the critic of poetry also, who compares Homer and Aeschylus in the insipid and irrational manner of the schools of the day, characteristically reasoning about the probability of matters which do not admit of reasoning. He starts from a noble text: 'That without the sense of honour and dishonour neither states nor individuals ever do any good or great work.' But he soon passes on to more common-place topics. The antiquity of love, the blessing of having a lover, the incentive which love offers to daring deeds,

the examples of Alcestis and Achilles, are the chief themes of his discourse. The love of women is regarded by him as almost on an equality with that of men; and he makes the singular remark that the gods favour the return of love which is made by the beloved more than the original sentiment, because the lover is of a nobler and diviner nature.

There is something of a sophistical ring in the speech of Phaedrus, which recalls the first speech in imitation of Lysias, occurring in the Dialogue called the Phaedrus. This is still more marked in the speech of Pausanias which follows; and which is at once hyperlogical in form and also extremely confused and pedantic. Plato is attacking the logical feebleness of the sophists and rhetoricians, through their pupils, not forgetting by the way to satirize the monotonous and unmeaning rhythms which Prodicus and others were introducing into Attic prose (185 D, cp. Protag. 337). Of course, he is 'playing both sides of the game,' as in the Gorgias and Phaedrus; but it is not necessary in order to understand him that we should discuss the fairness of his mode of proceeding. The love of Pausanias for Agathon has already been touched upon in the Protagoras (315 D), and is alluded to by Aristophanes (193 B). Hence he is naturally the upholder of male loves, which, like all the other affections or actions of men, he regards as varying according to the manner of their performance. Like the sophists and like Plato himself, though in a different sense, he begins his discussion by an appeal to mythology, and distinguishes between the elder and younger love. The value which he attributes to such loves as motives to virtue and philosophy is at variance with modern and Christian notions, but is in accordance with Hellenic sentiment. The opinion of Christendom has not altogether condemned passionate friendships between persons of the same sex, but has certainly not encouraged them, because though innocent in themselves in a few temperaments they are liable to degenerate into fearful evil. Pausanias is very earnest in the defence of such loves; and he speaks of them as generally approved among Hellenes and disapproved by barbarians. His speech is 'more words than matter,' and might have been composed by a pupil of Lysias or of Prodicus, although there is no hint given that Plato is specially referring to them. As

Symposium. Eryximachus says, 'he makes a fair beginning, but a lame ending.'

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Plato transposes the two next speeches, as in the Republic he would transpose the virtues (iv. 430 D) and the mathematical sciences (vii. 528 A). This is done partly to avoid monotony, partly for the sake of making Aristophanes 'the cause of wit in others,' and also in order to bring the comic and tragic poet into juxtaposition, as if by accident. A suitable 'expectation' of Aristophanes is raised by the ludicrous circumstance of his having the hiccough, which is appropriately cured by his substitute, the physician Eryximachus. To Eryximachus Love is the good physician; he sees everything as an intelligent physicist, and, like many professors of his art in modern times, attempts to reduce the moral to the physical; or recognizes one law of love which pervades them both. There are loves and strifes of the body as well as of the mind. Like Hippocrates the Asclepiad, he is a disciple of Heracleitus, whose conception of the harmony of opposites he explains in a new way as the harmony after discord; to his common sense, as to that of many moderns as well as ancients, the identity of contradictories is an absurdity. His notion of love may be summed up as the harmony of man with himself in soul as well as body, and of all things in heaven and earth with one another.

Aristophanes is ready to laugh and make laugh before he opens his mouth, just as Socrates, true to his character, is ready to argue before he begins to speak. He expresses the very genius of the old comedy, its coarse and forcible imagery, and the licence of its language in speaking about the gods. He has no sophistical notions about love, which is brought back by him to its common-sense meaning of love between intelligent beings. His account of the origin of the sexes has the greatest (comic) probability and verisimilitude. Nothing in Aristophanes is more truly Aristophanic than the description of the human monster whirling round on four arms and four legs, eight in all, with incredible rapidity. Yet there is a mixture of earnestness in this jest; three serious principles seem to be insinuated: — first, that man cannot exist in isolation; he must be reunited if he is to be perfected: secondly, that love is the mediator and reconciler of poor, divided human nature: thirdly, that the loves of this world are an

indistinct anticipation of an ideal union which is not yet realized.

The speech of Agathon is conceived in a higher strain, and receives the real, if half-ironical, approval of Socrates. It is the speech of the tragic poet and a sort of poem, like tragedy, moving among the gods of Olympus, and not among the elder or Orphic deities. In the idea of the antiquity of love he cannot agree; love is not of the olden time, but present and youthful ever. The speech may be compared with that speech of Socrates in the Phaedrus (239 A, B) in which he describes himself as talking dithyrambs. It is at once a preparation for Socrates and a foil to him. The rhetoric of Agathon elevates the soul to 'sunlit heights,' but at the same time contrasts with the natural and necessary eloquence of Socrates. Agathon contributes the distinction between love and the works of love, and also hints incidentally that love is always of beauty, which Socrates afterwards raises into a principle. While the consciousness of discord is stronger in the comic poet Aristophanes, Agathon, the tragic poet, has a deeper sense of harmony and reconciliation, and speaks of Love as the creator and artist.

All the earlier speeches embody common opinions coloured with a tinge of philosophy. They furnish the material out of which Socrates proceeds to form his discourse, starting, as in other places, from mythology and the opinions of men. From Phaedrus he takes the thought that love is stronger than death; from Pausanias, that the true love is akin to intellect and political activity; from Eryximachus, that love is a universal phenomenon and the great power of nature; from Aristophanes, that love is the child of want, and is not merely the love of the congenial or of the whole, but (as he adds) of the good; from Agathon, that love is of beauty, not however of beauty only, but of birth in beauty. As it would be out of character for Socrates to make a lengthened harangue, the speech takes the form of a dialogue between Socrates and a mysterious woman of foreign extraction. She elicits the final truth from one who knows nothing, and who, speaking by the lips of another, and himself a despiser of rhetoric, is proved also to be the most consummate of rhetoricians (cp. Menexenus 249 D).

The last of the six discourses begins with a short argument

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which overthrows not only Agathon but all the preceding speakers by the help of a distinction which has escaped them. Extravagant praises have been ascribed to Love as the author of every good; no sort of encomium was too high for him, whether deserved and true or not. But Socrates has no talent for speaking anything but the truth, and if he is to speak the truth of Love he must honestly confess that he is not a good at all: for love is of the good, and no man can desire that which he has. This piece of dialectics is ascribed to Diotima, who has already urged upon Socrates the argument which he urges against Agathon. That the distinction is a fallacy is obvious; it is almost acknowledged to be so by Socrates himself. For he who has beauty or good may desire more of them; and he who has beauty or good in himself may desire beauty and good in others. The fallacy seems to arise out of a confusion between the abstract ideas of good and beauty, which do not admit of degrees, and their partial realization in individuals.

But Diotima, the prophetess of Mantineia, whose sacred and superhuman character raises her above the ordinary proprieties of women, has taught Socrates far more than this about the art and mystery of love. She has taught him that love is another aspect of philosophy. The same want in the human soul which is satisfied in the vulgar by the procreation of children, may become the highest aspiration of intellectual desire. As the Christian might speak of hungering and thirsting after righteousness; or of divine loves under the figure of human (cp. Eph. v. 32, 'This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church'); as the mediaeval saint might speak of the 'fruitio Dei;' as Dante saw all things contained in his love of Beatrice, so Plato would have us absorb all other loves and desires in the love of knowledge. Here is the beginning of Neoplatonism, or rather, perhaps, a proof (of which there are many) that the so-called mysticism of the East was not strange to the Greek of the fifth century before Christ. The first tumult of the affections was not wholly subdued; there were longings of a creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,

which no art could satisfy. To most men reason and passion appear to be antagonistic both in idea and fact. The union of

the greatest comprehension of knowledge and the burning intensity of love is a contradiction in nature, which may have existed in a far-off primeval age in the mind of some Hebrew prophet or other Eastern sage, but has now become an imagination only. Yet this 'passion of the reason' is the theme of the Symposium of Plato. And as there is no impossibility in supposing that 'one king, or son of a king, may be a philosopher,' so also there is a probability that there may be some few — perhaps one or two in a whole generation — in whom the light of truth may not lack the warmth of desire. And if there be such natures, no one will be disposed to deny that 'from them flow most of the benefits of individuals and states;' and even from imperfect combinations of the two elements in teachers or statesmen great good may often arise.

Yet there is a higher region in which love is not only felt, but satisfied, in the perfect beauty of eternal knowledge, beginning with the beauty of earthly things, and at last reaching a beauty in which all existence is seen to be harmonious and one. The limited affection is enlarged, and enabled to behold the ideal of all things. And here the highest summit which is reached in the Symposium is seen also to be the highest summit which is attained in the Republic, but approached from another side; and there is 'a way upwards and downwards,' which is the same and not the same in both. The ideal beauty of the one is the ideal good of the other; regarded not with the eye of knowledge, but of faith and desire; and they are respectively the source of beauty and the source of good in all other things. And by the steps of a 'ladder reaching to heaven' we pass from images of visible beauty (*εἰκόνες*), and from the hypotheses of the Mathematical sciences, which are not yet based upon the idea of good, through the concrete to the abstract, and, by different paths arriving, behold the vision of the eternal (cp. Symp. 211 *ὥσπερ ἐπαναβαθμοῖς τισιν*: Rep. vi. 511 A, B *οἷον ἐπιβάσεις τε καὶ ὁρμάς*; also Phaedrus 247 ff.). Under one aspect 'the idea is love'; under another, 'truth.' In both the lover of wisdom is the 'spectator of all time and of all existence.' This is a 'mystery' in which Plato also obscurely intimates the union of the spiritual and fleshly, the interpenetration of the moral and intellectual faculties.

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The divine image of beauty which resides within Socrates has been revealed; the Silenus, or outward man, has now to be exhibited. The description of Socrates follows immediately after the speech of Socrates; one is the complement of the other. At the height of divine inspiration, when the force of nature can no further go, by way of contrast to this extreme idealism, Alcibiades, accompanied by a troop of revellers and a flute-girl, staggers in, and being drunk is able to tell of things which he would have been ashamed to make known if he had been sober. The state of his affections towards Socrates, unintelligible to us and perverted as they appear, affords an illustration of the power ascribed to the loves of man in the speech of Pausanias. He does not suppose his feelings to be peculiar to himself: there are several other persons in the company who have been equally in love with Socrates, and like himself have been deceived by him. The singular part of this confession is the combination of the most degrading passion with the desire of virtue and improvement. Such an union is not wholly untrue to human nature, which is capable of combining good and evil in a degree beyond what we can easily conceive. In imaginative persons, especially, the God and beast in man seem to part asunder more than is natural in a well-regulated mind. The Platonic Socrates (for of the real Socrates this may be doubted; cp. his public rebuke of Critias for his shameful love of Euthydemus in Xenophon, Memorabilia i. 2, 29, 30) does not regard the greatest evil of Greek life as a thing not to be spoken of; but it has a ridiculous element (Plato's Symp. 214), and is a subject for irony, no less than for moral reprobation (cp. Plato's Symp. 218 D, E). It is also used as a figure of speech which no one interpreted literally (cp. Xen. Symp. 4. 57). Nor does Plato feel any repugnance, such as would be felt in modern times, at bringing his great master and hero into connexion with nameless crimes. He is contented with representing him as a saint, who has won 'the Olympian victory' over the temptations of human nature. The fault of taste, which to us is so glaring and which was recognized by the Greeks of a later age (Athenaeus xi. 114), was not perceived by Plato himself. We are still more surprised to find that the philosopher is incited to take the first step in his upward progress

(Symp. 210 A) by the beauty of young men and boys, which was alone capable of inspiring the modern feeling of romance in the Greek mind. The passion of love took the spurious form of an enthusiasm for the ideal of beauty — a worship as of some godlike image of an Apollo or Antinous. But the love of youth when not depraved was a love of virtue and modesty as well as of beauty, the one being the expression of the other; and in certain Greek states, especially at Sparta and Thebes, the honourable attachment of a youth to an elder man was a part of his education. The 'army of lovers and their beloved who would be invincible if they could be united by such a tie' (Symp. 178 ff.), is not a mere fiction of Plato's, but seems actually to have existed at Thebes in the days of Epaminondas and Pelopidas, if we may believe writers cited anonymously by Plutarch, Pelop. Vit. 18, 19. It is observable that Plato never in the least degree excuses the depraved love of the body (cp. Charm. 155; Rep. v. 468 B, C; Laws viii. 841 ff.; Symp. 211 D; and once more Xenophon, Mem. i. 2, 29, 30), nor is there any Greek writer of mark who condones or approves such connexions. But owing partly to the puzzling nature of the subject (182 A, B) these friendships are spoken of by Plato in a manner different from that customary among ourselves. To most of them we should hesitate to ascribe, any more than to the attachment of Achilles and Patroclus in Homer, an immoral or licentious character. There were many, doubtless, to whom the love of the fair mind was the noblest form of friendship (Rep. iii. 402 D), and who deemed the friendship of man with man to be higher than the love of woman, because altogether separated from the bodily appetites. The existence of such attachments may be reasonably attributed to the inferiority and seclusion of woman, and the want of a real family or social life and parental influence in Hellenic cities; and they were encouraged by the practice of gymnastic exercises, by the meetings of political clubs, and by the tie of military companionship. They were also an educational institution: a young person was specially entrusted by his parents to some elder friend who was expected by them to train their son in manly exercises and in virtue. It is not likely that a Greek parent committed him to a lover, any more than we should to a schoolmaster, in the expectation that he would be corrupted by him, but rather in the hope that his morals

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would be better cared for than was possible in a great household of slaves.

It is difficult to adduce the authority of Plato either for or against such practices or customs, because it is not always easy to determine whether he is speaking of 'the heavenly and philosophical love, or of the coarse Polyhymnia:' and he often refers to them (e. g. in the Symposium) half in jest, yet 'with a certain degree of seriousness' (Cp. Laws, viii. 836 foll.). We observe that they entered into one part of Greek literature, but not into another, and that the larger part is free from such associations. Indecency was an element of the ludicrous in the old Greek Comedy, as it has been in other ages and countries. But effeminate love was always condemned as well as ridiculed by the Comic poets; and in the New Comedy the allusions to such topics have disappeared. They seem to have been no longer tolerated by the greater refinement of the age. False sentiment is found in the Lyric and Elegiac poets; and in mythology 'the greatest of the Gods' (Rep. iii. 388 B) is not exempt from evil imputations. But the morals of a nation are not to be judged of wholly by its literature. Hellas was not necessarily more corrupted in the days of the Persian and Peloponnesian wars, or of Plato and the Orators, than England in the time of Fielding and Smollett, or France in the nineteenth century. No one supposes certain French novels to be a representation of ordinary French life. And the greater part of Greek literature, beginning with Homer and including the tragedians, philosophers, and, with the exception of the Comic poets (whose business was to raise a laugh by whatever means), all the greater writers of Hellas who have been preserved to us, are free from the taint of indecency.

Some general considerations occur to our mind when we begin to reflect on this subject. (1) That good and evil are linked together in human nature, and have often existed side by side in the world and in man to an extent hardly credible. We cannot distinguish them, and are therefore unable to part them; as in the parable 'they grow together unto the harvest:' it is only a rule of external decency by which society can divide them. Nor should we be right in inferring from the prevalence of any one vice or corruption that a state or individual was demoralized in their whole character. Not only has the corruption

of the best been sometimes thought to be the worst, but it may be remarked that this very excess of evil has been the stimulus to good (cp. Plato, Laws xii. 951 B, where he says that in the most corrupt cities individuals are to be found beyond all praise). (2) It may be observed that evils which admit of degrees can seldom be rightly estimated, because under the same name actions of the most different degrees of culpability may be included. No charge is more easily set going than the imputation of secret wickedness (which cannot be either proved or disproved and often cannot be defined) when directed against a person of whom the world, or a section of it, is predisposed to think evil. And it is quite possible that the malignity of Greek scandal, aroused by some personal jealousy or party enmity, may have converted the innocent friendship of a great man for a noble youth into a connexion of another kind. Such accusations were brought against several of the leading men of Hellas, e. g. Cimon, Alcibiades, Critias, Demosthenes, Epaminondas: several of the Roman emperors were assailed by similar weapons which have been used even in our own day against statesmen of the highest character. (3) While we know that in this matter there is a great gulf fixed between Greek and Christian Ethics, yet, if we would do justice to the Greeks, we must also acknowledge that there was a greater outspokenness among them than among ourselves about the things which nature hides, and that the more frequent mention of such topics is not to be taken as the measure of the prevalence of offences, or as a proof of the general corruption of society. It is likely that every religion in the world has used words or practised rites in one age, which have become distasteful or repugnant to another. We cannot, though for different reasons, trust the representations either of Comedy or Satire; and still less of Christian Apologists. (4) We observe that at Thebes and Lacedaemon the attachment of an elder friend to a beloved youth was often deemed to be a part of his education; and was encouraged by his parents — it was only shameful if it degenerated into licentiousness. Such we may believe to have been the tie which united Asopychus and Cephisodorus with the great Epaminondas in whose companionship they fell (Plutarch, Amat. 117; Athenaeus on the authority of Theopompus, xiii. 605). (5) A small matter: there appears to be a difference of custom

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among the Greeks and among ourselves, as between ourselves and continental nations at the present time, in modes of salutation. We must not suspect evil in the hearty kiss or embrace of a male friend 'returning from the army at Potidaea' any more than in a similar salutation when practised by members of the same family. But those who make these admissions, and who regard, not without pity, the victims of such illusions in our own day, whose life has been blasted by them, may be none the less resolved that the natural and healthy instincts of mankind shall alone be tolerated ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ πόλει; and that the lesson of manliness which we have inherited from our fathers shall not degenerate into sentimentalism or effeminacy. The possibility of an honourable connexion of this kind seems to have died out with Greek civilization. Among the Romans, and also among barbarians, such as the Celts and Persians, there is no trace of such attachments existing in any noble or virtuous form.

(*Compare Hoeck's Creta, vol.* 3. *p.* 106 ff, *and the admirable and exhaustive article of Meier in Ersch and Grueber's Cyclopedia, vol.* 16, *on this subject; Plutarch, Amatores; Athenaeus*, xiii. 605; *Lysias, contra Simonem; Aeschines, contra Timarchum.*)

The character of Alcibiades in the Symposium is hardly less remarkable than that of Socrates, and agrees with the picture given of him in the first of the two Dialogues which are called by his name, and also with the slight sketch of him in the Protagoras. He is the impersonation of lawlessness — 'the lion's whelp, who ought not to be reared in the city,' yet not without a certain generosity which gained the hearts of men,— strangely fascinated by Socrates, and possessed of a genius which might have been either the destruction or salvation of Athens. The dramatic interest of the character is heightened by the recollection of his after history. He seems to have been present to the mind of Plato in the description of the democratic man of the Republic (viii. 560; cp. also Alcibiades 1).

There is no criterion of the date of the Symposium, except that which is furnished by the allusion to the division of Arcadia after the destruction of Mantinea. This took place in the year B. C. 384, which is the forty-fourth year of Plato's life. The Symposium cannot therefore be regarded as a youthful work. As

Mantinea was restored in the year 369, the composition of the Dialogue will probably fall between 384 and 369. Whether the recollection of the event is more likely to have been renewed at the destruction or restoration of the city, rather than at some intermediate period, is a consideration not worth raising.

The Symposium is connected with the Phaedrus both in style and subject; they are the only Dialogues of Plato in which the theme of love is discussed at length. In both of them philosophy is regarded as a sort of enthusiasm or madness; Socrates is himself 'a prophet new inspired' with Bacchanalian revelry, which, like his philosophy, he characteristically pretends to have derived not from himself but from others. The Phaedo also presents some points of comparison with the Symposium. For there, too, philosophy might be described as 'dying for love;' and there are not wanting many touches of humour and fancy, which remind us of the Symposium (64 B, 85 B, 99 A). But while the Phaedo and Phaedrus look backwards and forwards to past and future states of existence, in the Symposium there is no break between this world and another; and we rise from one to the other by a regular series of steps or stages, proceeding from the particulars of sense to the universal of reason, and from one universal to many, which are finally reunited in a single science (cp. Rep. vi. 511 B). At first immortality means only the succession of existences; even knowledge comes and goes. Then follows, in the language of the mysteries, a higher and a higher degree of initiation; at last we arrive at the perfect vision of beauty, not relative or changing, but eternal and absolute; not bounded by this world, or in or out of this world, but an aspect of the divine, extending over all things, and having no limit of space or time: this is the highest knowledge of which the human mind is capable. Plato does not go on to ask whether the individual is absorbed in the sea of light and beauty or retains his personality. Enough for him to have attained the true beauty or good, without enquiring precisely into the relation in which human beings stood to it. That the soul has such a reach of thought, and is capable of partaking of the eternal nature, seems to imply that she too is eternal (cp. Phaedrus, 245 foll.). But Plato does not distinguish the eternal in man from the eternal in the world or in God. He is willing to rest in the contemplation

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of the idea, which to him is the cause of all things (Rep. vi. 508 E), and has no strength to go further.

The Symposium of Xenophon, in which Socrates describes himself as a pander, and also discourses of the difference between sensual and sentimental love, likewise offers several interesting points of comparison. But the suspicion which hangs over other writings of Xenophon, and the numerous minute references to the Phaedrus and Symposium, as well as to some of the other writings of Plato, throw a doubt on the genuineness of the work. The Symposium of Xenophon, if written by him at all, would certainly show that he wrote against Plato, and was acquainted with his works. Of this hostility there is no trace in the Memorabilia. Such a rivalry is more characteristic of an imitator than of an original writer. The (so-called) Symposium of Xenophon may therefore have no more title to be regarded as genuine than the confessedly spurious Apology.

There are no means of determining the relative order in time of the Phaedrus, Symposium, Phaedo. The order which has been adopted in this translation rests on no other principle than the desire to bring together in a series the memorials of the life of Socrates.

SYMPOSIUM.

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE.

APOLLODORUS, *who repeats to his companion the dialogue which he had heard from Aristodemus, and had already once narrated to Glaucon.*
PHAEDRUS.
PAUSANIAS.
ERYXIMACHUS.
ARISTOPHANES.
AGATHON.
SOCRATES.
ALCIBIADES.
A TROOP OF REVELLERS.

SCENE: — The House of Agathon.

Symposium.
APOLLODORUS, GLAUCON.

Steph. 172 CONCERNING the things about which you ask to be informed I believe that I am not ill-prepared with an answer. For the day before yesterday I was coming from my own home at Phalerum to the city, and one of my acquaintance, who had caught a sight of me from behind, calling out playfully in the distance, said: Apollodorus, O thou Phalerian[1] man, halt! So I did as I was bid; and then he said, I was looking for you, Apollodorus, only just now, that I might ask you about the speeches in praise of love, which were delivered by Socrates, Alcibiades, and others, at Agathon's supper. Phoenix, the son of Philip, told another person who told me of them; his narrative was very indistinct, but he said that you knew, and I wish that you would give me an account of them. Who, if not you, should be the reporter of the words of your friend? And first tell me, he said, were you present at this meeting?

The speeches delivered at the banquet of Agathon.

Your informant, Glaucon, I said, must have been very

[1] Probably a play of words on φαλαρὸς, 'bald-headed.'

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GLAUCON, APOLLODORUS.

indistinct indeed, if you imagine that the occasion was recent; or that I could have been of the party.

Why, yes, he replied, I thought so.

Impossible: I said. Are you ignorant that for many years Agathon has not resided at Athens; and not three have elapsed since I became acquainted with Socrates, and have made it my daily business to know all that he says and does. 173
There was a time when I was running about the world, fancying myself to be well employed, but I was really a most wretched being, no better than you are now. I thought that I ought to do anything rather than be a philosopher.

Well, he said, jesting apart, tell me when the meeting occurred.

The banquet took place many years ago when Agathon won his first prize.

In our boyhood, I replied, when Agathon won the prize with his first tragedy, on the day after that on which he and his chorus offered the sacrifice of victory.

Then it must have been a long while ago, he said; and who told you — did Socrates?

The speeches had been preserved by Aristodemus.

No indeed, I replied, but the same person who told Phoenix;— he was a little fellow, who never wore any shoes, Aristodemus, of the deme of Cydathenaeum. He had been at Agathon's feast; and I think that in those days there was no one who was a more devoted admirer of Socrates. Moreover, I have asked Socrates about the truth of some parts of his narrative, and he confirmed them. Then, said Glaucon, let us have the tale over again; is not the road to Athens just made for conversation? And so we walked, and talked of the discourses on love; and therefore, as I said at first, I am not ill-prepared to comply with your request, and will have another rehearsal of them if you like. For to speak or to hear others speak of philosophy always gives me the greatest pleasure, to say nothing of the profit. But when I hear another strain, especially that of you rich men and traders, such conversation displeases me; and I pity you who are my companions, because you think that you are doing something when in reality you are doing nothing. And I dare say that you pity me in return, whom you regard as an unhappy creature, and very probably you are right. But I certainly know of you what you only think of me — there is the difference.

Companion. I see, Apollodorus, that you are just the same — always speaking evil of yourself, and of others; and I do believe that you pity all mankind, with the exception of Socrates, yourself first of all, true in this to your old name, which, however deserved, I know not how you acquired, of Apollodorus the madman; for you are always raging against yourself and everybody but Socrates. *Symposium.* COMPANION, APOLLODORUS.

Apollodorus. Yes, friend, and the reason why I am said to be mad, and out of my wits, is just because I have these notions of myself and you; no other evidence is required.

Com. No more of that, Apollodorus; but let me ask you again to repeat the conversation.

Apoll. Well, the tale of love was on this wise:— But per-
174 haps I had better begin at the beginning, and endeavour to give you the exact words of Aristodemus:

He said that he met Socrates fresh from the bath and sandalled; and as the sight of the sandals was unusual, he asked him whither he was going that he had been converted into such a beau:— Aristodemus the narrator had gone to the banquet on the invitation of Socrates.

To a banquet at Agathon's, he replied, whose invitation to his sacrifice of victory I refused yesterday, fearing a crowd, but promising that I would come to-day instead; and so I have put on my finery, because he is such a fine man. What say you to going with me unasked?

I will do as you bid me, I replied.

Follow then, he said, and let us demolish the proverb:—

'To the feasts of inferior men the good unbidden go;'

instead of which our proverb will run:—

'To the feasts of the good the good unbidden go;'

and this alteration may be supported by the authority of Homer himself, who not only demolishes but literally outrages the proverb. For, after picturing Agamemnon as the most valiant of men, he makes Menelaus, who is but a faint-hearted warrior, come unbidden[1] to the banquet of Agamemnon, who is feasting and offering sacrifices, not the better to the worse, but the worse to the better. Homer violates his own rule.

I rather fear, Socrates, said Aristodemus, lest this may still

[1] Iliad ii. 408, and xvii. 588.

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ARISTODEMUS, AGATHON.

be my case: and that, like Menelaus in Homer, I shall be the inferior person, who

'To the feasts of the wise unbidden goes.'

But I shall say that I was bidden of you, and then you will have to make an excuse.

'Two going together,'

he replied, in Homeric fashion, one or other of them may invent an excuse by the way[1].

This was the style of their conversation as they went along. Socrates dropped behind in a fit of abstraction, and desired Aristodemus, who was waiting, to go on before him. When he reached the house of Agathon he found the doors wide open, and a comical thing happened. A servant coming out met him, and led him at once into the banqueting-hall in which the guests were reclining, for the banquet was about to begin. Welcome, Aristodemus, said Agathon, as soon as he appeared — you are just in time to sup with us; if you come on any other matter put it off, and make one of us, as I was looking for you yesterday and meant to have asked you, if I could have found you. But what have you done with Socrates?

Aristodemus is welcome on his own account, but where is his inseparable companion?

I turned round, but Socrates was nowhere to be seen; and I had to explain that he had been with me a moment before, and that I came by his invitation to the supper.

You were quite right in coming, said Agathon; but where is he himself?

He was behind me just now, as I entered, he said, and I 175
cannot think what has become of him.

Go and look for him, boy, said Agathon, and bring him in; and do you, Aristodemus, meanwhile take the place by Eryximachus.

The servant then assisted him to wash, and he lay down, and presently another servant came in and reported that our friend Socrates had retired into the portico of the neighbouring house. 'There he is fixed,' said he, 'and when I call to him he will not stir.'

[1] Iliad x. 224.

AGATHON, ARISTODEMUS, SOCRATES.

How strange, said Agathon; then you must call him again, and keep calling him.

Let him alone, said my informant; he has a way of stopping anywhere and losing himself without any reason. I believe that he will soon appear; do not therefore disturb him.

The courtesy of Agathon.

Well, if you think so, I will leave him, said Agathon. And then, turning to the servants, he added, 'Let us have supper without waiting for him. Serve up whatever you please, for there is no one to give you orders; hitherto I have never left you to yourselves. But on this occasion imagine that you are our hosts, and that I and the company are your guests; treat us well, and then we shall commend you.' After this, supper was served, but still no Socrates; and during the meal Agathon several times expressed a wish to send for him, but Aristodemus objected; and at last when the feast was about half over — for the fit, as usual, was not of long duration — Socrates entered. Agathon, who was reclining alone at the end of the table, begged that he would take the place next to him; that 'I may touch you,' he said, 'and have the benefit of that wise thought which came into your mind in the portico, and is now in your possession; for I am certain that you would not have come away until you had found what you sought.'

At length Socrates enters: the compliments which pass between him and Agathon.

How I wish, said Socrates, taking his place as he was desired, that wisdom could be infused by touch, out of the fuller into the emptier man, as water runs through wool out of a fuller cup into an emptier one; if that were so, how greatly should I value the privilege of reclining at your side! For you would have filled me full with a stream of wisdom plenteous and fair; whereas my own is of a very mean and questionable sort, no better than a dream. But yours is bright and full of promise, and was manifested forth in all the splendour of youth the day before yesterday, in the presence of more than thirty thousand Hellenes.

You are mocking, Socrates, said Agathon, and ere long you and I will have to determine who bears off the palm of wisdom — of this Dionysus shall be the judge; but at present you are better occupied with supper.

176 Socrates took his place on the couch, and supped with the

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rest; and then libations were offered, and after a hymn had been sung to the god, and there had been the usual ceremonies, they were about to commence drinking, when Pausanias said, And now, my friends, how can we drink with least injury to ourselves? I can assure you that I feel severely the effect of yesterday's potations, and must have time to recover; and I suspect that most of you are in the same predicament, for you were of the party yesterday. Consider then: How can the drinking be made easiest?

The good advice of Pausanias.

I entirely agree, said Aristophanes, that we should, by all means, avoid hard drinking, for I was myself one of those who were yesterday drowned in drink.

Men who drank hard yesterday should avoid drinking to-day.

I think that you are right, said Eryximachus, the son of Acumenus; but I should still like to hear one other person speak: Is Agathon able to drink hard?

I am not equal to it, said Agathon.

Then, said Eryximachus, the weak heads like myself, Aristodemus, Phaedrus, and others who never can drink, are fortunate in finding that the stronger ones are not in a drinking mood. (I do not include Socrates, who is able either to drink or to abstain, and will not mind, whichever we do.) Well, as none of the company seem disposed to drink much, I may be forgiven for saying, as a physician, that drinking deep is a bad practice, which I never follow, if I can help, and certainly do not recommend to another, least of all to any one who still feels the effects of yesterday's carouse.

I always do what you advise, and especially what you prescribe as a physician, rejoined Phaedrus the Myrrhinusian, and the rest of the company, if they are wise, will do the same.

It was agreed that drinking was not to be the order of the day, but that they were all to drink only so much as they pleased.

Then, said Eryximachus, as you are all agreed that drinking is to be voluntary, and that there is to be no compulsion, I move, in the next place, that the flute-girl, who has just made her appearance, be told to go away and play to herself, or, if she likes, to the women who are within[1]. To-day let us have conversation instead; and, if you will

[1] Cp. Protag. 347.

177 allow me, I will tell you what sort of conversation. This proposal having been accepted, Eryximachus proceeded as follows:—

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I will begin, he said, after the manner of Melanippe in Euripides,

'Not mine the word'

which I am about to speak, but that of Phaedrus. For often he says to me in an indignant tone:—'What a strange thing it is, Eryximachus, that, whereas other gods have poems and hymns made in their honour, the great and glorious god, Love, has no encomiast among all the poets who are so many. There are the worthy sophists too—the excellent Prodicus for example, who have descanted in prose on the virtues of Heracles and other heroes; and, what is still more extraordinary, I have met with a philosophical work in which the utility of salt has been made the theme of an eloquent discourse; and many other like things have had a like honour bestowed upon them. And only to think that there should have been an eager interest created about them, and yet that to this day no one has ever dared worthily to hymn Love's praises! So entirely has this great deity been neglected.' Now in this Phaedrus seems to me to be quite right, and therefore I want to offer him a contribution; also I think that at the present moment we who are here assembled cannot do better than honour the god Love. If you agree with me, there will be no lack of conversation; for I mean to propose that each of us in turn, going from left to right, shall make a speech in honour of Love. Let him give us the best which he can; and Phaedrus, because he is sitting first on the left hand, and because he is the father of the thought, shall begin.

Eryximachus descants upon the neglect of the poets to hymn love's praises.

No one will vote against you, Eryximachus, said Socrates. How can I oppose your motion, who profess to understand nothing but matters of love; nor, I presume, will Agathon and Pausanias; and there can be no doubt of Aristophanes, whose whole concern is with Dionysus and Aphrodite; nor will any one disagree of those whom I see around me. The proposal, as I am aware, may seem rather hard upon us whose place is last; but we shall be contented if we hear

It is agreed to make a succession of speeches in his honour.

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SOCRATES, PHAEDRUS.

some good speeches first. Let Phaedrus begin the praise of Love, and good luck to him. All the company expressed their assent, and desired him to do as Socrates bade him. 178

Aristodemus did not recollect all that was said, nor do I recollect all that he related to me; but I will tell you what I thought most worthy of remembrance, and what the chief speakers said.

Phaedrus began by affirming that Love is a mighty god, and wonderful among gods and men, but especially wonderful in his birth. For he is the eldest of the gods, which is an honour to him; and a proof of his claim to this honour is, that of his parents there is no memorial; neither poet nor prose-writer has ever affirmed that he had any. As Hesiod says:—

> 'First Chaos came, and then broad-bosomed Earth,
> The everlasting seat of all that is,
> And Love.'

In other words, after Chaos, the Earth and Love, these two, came into being. Also Parmenides sings of their Generation, saying,

> 'First of the powers of heaven, he fashioned Love.'

Love is the eldest of the gods, and the source of the greatest good.

And Acusilaus agrees with Hesiod. Thus numerous are the witnesses who acknowledge Love to be the eldest of the gods. And not only is he the eldest, he is also the source of the greatest benefits to us. For I know not any greater blessing to a young man who is beginning life than a virtuous lover, or to the lover than a beloved youth. For the principle which ought to be the guide of men who would nobly live — that principle, I say, neither kindred, nor honour, nor wealth, nor any other motive is able to implant so well as love. Of what am I speaking? Of the sense of honour and dishonour, without which neither states nor individuals ever do any good or great work. And I say that a lover who is detected in doing any dishonourable act, or submitting through cowardice when any dishonour is done to him by another, will be more pained at being detected by his beloved than at being seen by his father, or by his companions, or by any one else. The beloved too, when he is found in any disgraceful situation, has the same feeling about his lover. And if there were only some way of contriving

For an honourable love is the best incentive to virtue.

that a state or an army should be made up of lovers and their loves [1], they would be the very best governors of their own city, abstaining from all dishonour, and emulating one
179 another in honour; and when fighting at each other's side, although a mere handful, they would overcome the world. For what lover would not choose rather to be seen by all mankind than by his beloved, either when abandoning his post or throwing away his arms? He would be ready to die a thousand deaths rather than endure this. Or who would desert his beloved or fail him in the hour of danger? The veriest coward would become an inspired hero, equal to the bravest, at such a time; Love would inspire him. That courage which, as Homer says, the god breathes into the souls of some heroes, Love of his own nature infuses into the lover.

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Love has made men and women dare to die for their beloved. The examples of Alcestis and Achilles.

Love will make men dare to die for their beloved — love alone; and women as well as men. Of this, Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, is a monument to all Hellas; for she was willing to lay down her life on behalf of her husband, when no one else would, although he had a father and mother; but the tenderness of her love so far exceeded theirs, that she made them seem to be strangers in blood to their own son, and in name only related to him; and so noble did this action of hers appear to the gods, as well as to men, that among the many who have done virtuously she is one of the very few to whom, in admiration of her noble action, they have granted the privilege of returning alive to earth; such exceeding honour is paid by the gods to the devotion and virtue of love. But Orpheus, the son of Oeagrus, the harper, they sent empty away, and presented to him an apparition only of her whom he sought, but herself they would not give up, because he showed no spirit; he was only a harp-player, and did not dare like Alcestis to die for love, but was contriving how he might enter Hades alive; moreover, they afterwards caused him to suffer death at the hands of women, as the punishment of his cowardliness. Very different was the reward of the true love of Achilles towards his lover Patroclus — his lover and not his love (the notion that Patroclus was the beloved one is a foolish error

[1] Cp. Rep. v. 468 D.

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into which Aeschylus has fallen, for Achilles was surely the fairer of the two, fairer also than all the other heroes; and, as Homer informs us, he was still beardless, and younger far). And greatly as the gods honour the virtue of love, still 180
the return of love on the part of the beloved to the lover is more admired and valued and rewarded by them, for the lover is more divine; because he is inspired by God. Now Achilles was quite aware, for he had been told by his mother, that he might avoid death and return home, and live to a good old age, if he abstained from slaying Hector. Nevertheless he gave his life to revenge his friend, and dared to die, not only in his defence, but after he was dead. Wherefore the gods honoured him even above Alcestis, and sent him to the Islands of the Blest. These are my reasons for affirming that Love is the eldest and noblest and mightiest of the gods, and the chiefest author and giver of virtue in life, and of happiness after death.

This, or something like this, was the speech of Phaedrus; and some other speeches followed which Aristodemus did not remember; the next which he repeated was that of Pausanias. Phaedrus, he said, the argument has not been set before us, I think, quite in the right form;—we should not be called upon to praise Love in such an indiscriminate manner. If there were only one Love, then what you said would be well enough; but since there are more Loves than one, you should have begun by determining which of them was to be the theme of our praises. I will amend this defect; and first of all I will tell you which Love is deserving of praise, and then try to hymn the praiseworthy one in a manner worthy of him. For we all know that Love is inseparable from Aphrodite, and if there were only one Aphrodite there would be only one Love; but as there are two goddesses there must be two Loves. And am I not right in asserting that there are two goddesses? The elder one, having no mother, who is called the heavenly Aphrodite—she is the daughter of Uranus; the younger, who is the daughter of Zeus and Dione—her we call common; and the Love who is her fellow-worker is rightly named common, as the other love is called heavenly. All the gods ought to have praise given to them, but not without distinction of their natures; and

The spiritual and the common love derived respectively from the heavenly and the earthly Aphrodite.

therefore I must try to distinguish the characters of the two
81 Loves. Now actions vary according to the manner of their performance. Take, for example, that which we are now doing, drinking, singing and talking — these actions are not in themselves either good or evil, but they turn out in this or that way according to the mode of performing them; and when well done they are good, and when wrongly done they are evil; and in like manner not every love, but only that which has a noble purpose, is noble and worthy of praise. The Love who is the offspring of the common Aphrodite is essentially common, and has no discrimination, being such as the meaner sort of men feel, and is apt to be of women as well as of youths, and is of the body rather than of the soul — the most foolish beings are the objects of this love which desires only to gain an end, but never thinks of accomplishing the end nobly, and therefore does good and evil quite indiscriminately. The goddess who is his mother is far younger than the other, and she was born of the union of the male and female, and partakes of both. But the offspring of the heavenly Aphrodite is derived from a mother in whose birth the female has no part, — she is from the male only; this is that love which is of youths, and the goddess being older, there is nothing of wantonness in her. Those who are inspired by this love turn to the male, and delight in him who is the more valiant and intelligent nature; any one may recognise the pure enthusiasts in the very character of their attachments. For they love not boys, but intelligent beings whose reason is beginning to be developed, much about the time at which their beards begin to grow. And in choosing young men to be their companions, they mean to be faithful to them, and pass their whole life in company with them, not to take them in their inexperience, and deceive them, and play the fool with them, or run away from one to another of them. But the love of young boys should be forbidden by law, because their future is uncertain; they may turn out good or bad, either in body or soul, and much noble enthusiasm may be thrown away upon them; in this matter the good are a law to themselves, and the coarser sort of lovers ought to be restrained by force, as we restrain or
82 attempt to restrain them from fixing their affections on

The higher love is of the male, which may be a divine inspiration, and which may also be grossly abused.

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women of free birth. These are the persons who bring a reproach on love; and some have been led to deny the lawfulness of such attachments because they see the impropriety and evil of them; for surely nothing that is decorously and lawfully done can justly be censured. Now here and in Lacedaemon the rules about love are perplexing, but in most cities they are simple and easily intelligible; in Elis and Boeotia, and in countries having no gifts of eloquence, they are very straightforward; the law is simply in favour of these connexions, and no one, whether young or old, has anything to say to their discredit; the reason being, as I suppose, that they are men of few words in those parts, and therefore the lovers do not like the trouble of pleading their suit. In Ionia and other places, and generally in countries which are subject to the barbarians, the custom is held to be dishonourable; loves of youths share the evil repute in which philosophy and gymnastics are held, because they are inimical to tyranny; for the interests of rulers require that their subjects should be poor in spirit [1], and that there should be no strong bond of friendship or society among them, which love, above all other motives, is likely to inspire, as our Athenian tyrants learned by experience; for the love of Aristogeiton and the constancy of Harmodius had a strength which undid their power. And, therefore, the ill-repute into which these attachments have fallen is to be ascribed to the evil condition of those who make them to be ill-reputed; that is to say, to the self-seeking of the governors and the cowardice of the governed; on the other hand, the indiscriminate honour which is given to them in some countries is attributable to the laziness of those who hold this opinion of them. In our own country a far better principle prevails, but, as I was saying, the explanation of it is rather perplexing. For, observe that open loves are held to be more honourable than secret ones, and that the love of the noblest and highest, even if their persons are less beautiful than others, is especially honourable. Consider, too, how great is the encouragement which all the world gives to the lover; neither is he supposed to be doing anything dishonourable; but if he succeeds he is praised, and if he fail he is blamed.

The feeling about male loves differs in the different states of Hellas.

[1] Cp. Arist. Politics, v. 11. § 15.

And in the pursuit of his love the custom of mankind allows him to do many strange things, which philosophy would
183 bitterly censure if they were done from any motive of interest, or wish for office or power. He may pray, and entreat, and supplicate, and swear, and lie on a mat at the door, and endure a slavery worse than that of any slave — in any other case friends and enemies would be equally ready to prevent him, but now there is no friend who will be ashamed of him and admonish him, and no enemy will charge him with meanness or flattery; the actions of a lover have a grace which ennobles them; and custom has decided that they are highly commendable and that there is no loss of character in them; and, what is strangest of all, he only may swear and forswear himself (so men say), and the gods will forgive his transgression, for there is no such thing as a lover's oath. Such is the entire liberty which gods and men have allowed the lover, according to the custom which prevails in our part of the world. From this point of view a man fairly argues that in Athens to love and to be loved is held to be a very honourable thing. But when parents forbid their sons to talk with their lovers, and place them under a tutor's care, who is appointed to see to these things, and their companions and equals cast in their teeth anything of the sort which they may observe, and their elders refuse to silence the reprovers and do not rebuke them — any one who reflects on all this will, on the contrary, think that we hold these practices to be most disgraceful. But, as I was saying at first, the truth as I imagine is, that whether such practices are honourable or whether they are dishonourable is not a simple question; they are honourable to him who follows them honourably, dishonourable to him who follows them dishonourably. There is dishonour in yielding to the evil, or in an evil manner; but there is honour in yielding to the good, or in an honourable manner. Evil is the vulgar lover who loves the body rather than the soul, inasmuch as he is not even stable, because he loves a thing which is in itself unstable, and therefore when the bloom of youth which he was desiring is over, he takes wing and flies away, in spite of all his words and promises; whereas the love of the noble disposition is life-long, for it becomes one with the

Custom allows the lover to do strange things.

The true love is the love of the soul, which has no regard to beauty or money or power, and which when

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tested by time is found to be enduring.

everlasting. The custom of our country would have both of 184
them proven well and truly, and would have us yield to the one sort of lover and avoid the other, and therefore encourages some to pursue, and others to fly; testing both the lover and beloved in contests and trials, until they show to which of the two classes they respectively belong. And this is the reason why, in the first place, a hasty attachment is held to be dishonourable, because time is the true test of this as of most other things; and secondly there is a dishonour in being overcome by the love of money, or of wealth, or of political power, whether a man is frightened into surrender by the loss of them, or, having experienced the benefits of money and political corruption, is unable to rise above the seductions of them. For none of these things are of a permanent or lasting nature; not to mention that no generous friendship ever sprang from them. There remains, then, only one way of honourable attachment which custom allows in the beloved, and this is the way of virtue; for as we admitted that any service which the lover does to him is not to be accounted flattery or a dishonour to himself, so the beloved has one way only of voluntary service which is not dishonourable, and this is virtuous service.

Love is fellow-service; and the love of youth and the practice of philosophy should meet in one.

For we have a custom, and according to our custom any one who does service to another under the idea that he will be improved by him either in wisdom, or in some other particular of virtue — such a voluntary service, I say, is not to be regarded as a dishonour, and is not open to the charge of flattery. And these two customs, one the love of youth, and the other the practice of philosophy and virtue in general, ought to meet in one, and then the beloved may honourably indulge the lover. For when the lover and beloved come together, having each of them a law, and the lover thinks that he is right in doing any service which he can to his gracious loving one; and the other that he is right in showing any kindness which he can to him who is making him wise and good; the one capable of communicating wisdom and vitrue, the other seeking to acquire them with a view to education and wisdom; when the two laws of love are fulfilled and meet in one — then, and then only, may the beloved yield with honour to the lover. Nor when love is of

this disinterested sort is there any disgrace in being deceived, but in every other case there is equal disgrace in being or
185 not being deceived. For he who is gracious to his lover under the impression that he is rich, and is disappointed of his gains because he turns out to be poor, is disgraced all the same: for he has done his best to show that he would give himself up to any one's 'uses base' for the sake of money; but this is not honourable. And on the same principle he who gives himself to a lover because he is a good man, and in the hope that he will be improved by his company, shows himself to be virtuous, even though the object of his affection turn out to be a villain, and to have no virtue; and if he is deceived he has committed a noble error. For he has proved that for his part he will do anything for anybody with a view to virtue and improvement, than which there can be nothing nobler. Thus noble in every case is the acceptance of another for the sake of virtue. This is that love which is the love of the heavenly goddess, and is heavenly, and of great price to individuals and cities, making the lover and the beloved alike eager in the work of their own improvement. But all other loves are the offspring of the other, who is the common goddess. To you, Phaedrus, I offer this my contribution in praise of love, which is as good as I could make extempore.

Aristophanes has the hiccough, and Eryximachus speaks in his turn.

Pāusănĭās cāme to ă pāuse — this is the balanced way in which I have been taught by the wise to speak; and Aristodemus said that the turn of Aristophanes was next, but either he had eaten too much, or from some other cause he had the hiccough, and was obliged to change turns with Eryximachus the physician, who was reclining on the couch below him. Eryximachus, he said, you ought either to stop my hiccough, or to speak in my turn until I have left off.

I will do both, said Eryximachus: I will speak in your turn, and do you speak in mine; and while I am speaking let me recommend you to hold your breath, and if after you have done so for some time the hiccough is no better, then gargle with a little water; and if it still continues, tickle your nose with something and sneeze; and if you sneeze once or twice, even the most violent hiccough is sure

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to go. I will do as you prescribe, said Aristophanes, and now get on.

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Eryximachus spoke as follows: Seeing that Pausanias made a fair beginning, and but a lame ending, I must endeavour to supply his deficiency. I think that he has rightly distinguished two kinds of love. But my art further informs me that the double love is not merely an affection of the soul of man towards the fair, or towards anything, but is to be found in the bodies of all animals and in productions of the earth, and I may say in all that is; such is the conclusion which I seem to have gathered from my own art of medicine, whence I learn how great and wonderful and universal is the deity of love, whose empire extends over all things, divine as well as human. And from medicine I will begin that I may do honour to my art. There are in the human body these two kinds of love, which are confessedly different and unlike, and being unlike, they have loves and desires which are unlike; and the desire of the healthy is one, and the desire of the diseased is another; and as Pausanias was just now saying that to indulge good men is honourable, and bad men dishonourable: — so too in the body the good and healthy elements are to be indulged, and the bad elements and the elements of disease are not to be indulged, but discouraged. And this is what the physician has to do, and in this the art of medicine consists: for medicine may be regarded generally as the knowledge of the loves and desires of the body, and how to satisfy them or not; and the best physician is he who is able to separate fair love from foul, or to convert one into the other; and he who knows how to eradicate and how to implant love, whichever is required, and can reconcile the most hostile elements in the constitution and make them loving friends, is a skilful practitioner. Now the most hostile are the most opposite, such as hot and cold, bitter and sweet, moist and dry, and the like. And my ancestor, Asclepius, knowing how to implant friendship and accord in these elements, was the creator of our art, as our friends the poets here tell us, and I believe them; and not only medicine in every branch, but the arts of gymnastic and husbandry are under his dominion. Any one who pays the least attention to the subject will also perceive that in music there is the same

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Medicine is the knowledge of the loves and desires of the body, which are twofold.

Harmony is the reconciliation, not of opposite elements, but of elements which disagreed once,

reconciliation of opposites; and I suppose that this must have been the meaning of Heracleitus, although his words are not accurate; for he says that The One is united by disunion, like the harmony of the bow and the lyre. Now there is an absurdity in saying that harmony is discord or is composed of elements which are still in a state of discord. But what he probably meant was, that harmony is composed of differing notes of higher or lower pitch which disagreed once, but are now reconciled by the art of music; for if the higher and lower notes still disagreed, there could be no harmony,—clearly not. For harmony is a symphony, and symphony is an agreement; but an agreement of disagreements while they disagree there cannot be; you cannot harmonize that which disagrees. In like manner rhythm is compounded of elements short and long, once differing and now in accord; which accordance, as in the former instance, medicine, so in all these other cases, music implants, making love and unison to grow up among them; and thus music, too, is concerned with the principles of love in their application to harmony and rhythm. Again, in the essential nature of harmony and rhythm there is no difficulty in discerning love which has not yet become double. But when you want to use them in actual life, either in the composition of songs or in the correct performance of airs or metres composed already, which latter is called education, then the difficulty begins, and the good artist is needed. Then the old tale has to be repeated of fair and heavenly love — the love of Urania the fair and heavenly muse, and of the duty of accepting the temperate, and those who are as yet intemperate only that they may become temperate, and of preserving their love; and again, of the vulgar Polyhymnia, who must be used with circumspection that the pleasure be enjoyed, but may not generate licentiousness; just as in my own art it is a great matter so to regulate the desires of the epicure that he may gratify his tastes without the attendant evil of disease. Whence I infer that in music, in medicine, in all other things human as well as divine, both loves ought to be noted as far as may be, for they
188 are both present.

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and are now harmonized.

The course of the seasons is also full of both these principles; and when, as I was saying, the elements of hot and

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The presence of the true and false love may be discerned in men and animals, and in the seasons of the year.

cold, moist and dry, attain the harmonious love of one another and blend in temperance and harmony, they bring to men, animals, and plants health and plenty, and do them no harm; whereas the wanton love, getting the upper hand and affecting the seasons of the year, is very destructive and injurious, being the source of pestilence, and bringing many other kinds of diseases on animals and plants; for hoar-frost and hail and blight spring from the excesses and disorders of these elements of love, which to know in relation to the revolutions of the heavenly bodies and the seasons of the year is termed astronomy. Furthermore all sacrifices and the whole province of divination, which is the art of communion between gods and men — these, I say, are concerned only with the preservation of the good and the cure of the evil love. For all manner of impiety is likely to ensue if, instead of accepting and honouring and reverencing the harmonious love in all his actions, a man honours the other love, whether in his feelings towards gods or parents, towards the living or the dead. Wherefore the business of divination is to see to these loves and to heal them, and divination is the peacemaker of gods and men, working by a knowledge of the religious or irreligious tendencies which exist in human loves. Such is the great and mighty, or rather omnipotent force of love in general. And the love, more especially, which is concerned with the good, and which is perfected in company with temperance and justice, whether among gods or men, has the greatest power, and is the source of all our happiness and harmony, and makes us friends with the gods who are above us, and with one another. I dare say that I too have omitted several things which might be said in praise of Love, but this was not intentional, and you, Aristophanes, may now supply the omission or take some other line of commendation; for I perceive that you are rid of the hiccough.

Yes, said Aristophanes, who followed, the hiccough is 189
gone; not, however, until I applied the sneezing; and I wonder whether the harmony of the body has a love of such noises and ticklings, for I no sooner applied the sneezing than I was cured.

Eryximachus said: Beware, friend Aristophanes; although you are going to speak, you are making fun of me; and

I shall have to watch your speech and see whether I cannot have a laugh at you, when you might speak in peace.

You are quite right, said Aristophanes, laughing. I will unsay my words; but do you please not to watch me, as I fear that in the speech which I am about to make, instead of others laughing with me, which is to the manner born of our muse and would be all the better, I shall only be laughed at by them.

Do you expect to shoot your bolt and escape, Aristophanes? Well, perhaps if you are very careful and bear in mind that you will be called to account, I may be induced to let you off.

Aristophanes promises to treat of love in a new manner.

Aristophanes professed to open another vein of discourse; he had a mind to praise Love in another way, unlike that either of Pausanias or Eryximachus. Mankind, he said, judging by their neglect of him, have never, as I think, at all understood the power of Love. For if they had understood him they would surely have built noble temples and altars, and offered solemn sacrifices in his honour; but this is not done, and most certainly ought to be done: since of all the gods he is the best friend of men, the helper and the healer of the ills which are the great impediment to the happiness of the race. I will try to describe his power to you, and you shall teach the rest of the world what I am teaching you. In the first place, let me treat of the nature of man and what has happened to it; for the original human nature was not like the present, but different. The sexes were not two as they are now, but originally three in number; there was man, woman, and the union of the two, having a name corresponding to this double nature, which had once a real existence, but is now lost, and the word 'Androgynous' is only preserved as a term of reproach. In the second place, the primeval man was round, his back and sides forming a circle; and he had four hands and four feet, one head with
190 two faces, looking opposite ways, set on a round neck and precisely alike; also four ears, two privy members, and the remainder to correspond. He could walk upright as men now do, backwards or forwards as he pleased, and he could also roll over and over at a great pace, turning on his four hands and four feet, eight in all, like tumblers going over

The original human nature unlike the present.

The three sexes; their form and origin.

Symposium. ARISTOPHANES. and over with their legs in the air; this was when he wanted to run fast. Now the sexes were three, and such as I have described them; because the sun, moon, and earth are three; and the man was originally the child of the sun, the woman of the earth, and the man-woman of the moon, which is made up of sun and earth, and they were all round and moved round and round like their parents. Terrible was their might and strength, and the thoughts of their hearts were great, and they made an attack upon the gods; of them is told the tale of Otys and Ephialtes who, as Homer says, dared to scale heaven, and would have laid hands upon the gods. Doubt reigned in the celestial councils. Should they kill them and annihilate the race with thunderbolts, as they had done the giants, then there would be an end of the sacrifices and worship which men offered to them; but, on the other hand, the gods could not suffer their insolence to be unrestrained. At last, after a good deal of reflection, Zeus discovered a way. He said: 'Methinks I have a plan which will humble their pride and improve their manners; men shall continue to exist, but I will cut them in two and then they will be diminished in strength and increased in numbers; this will have the advantage of making them more profitable to us. They shall walk upright on two legs, and if they continue insolent and will not be quiet, I will split them again and they shall hop about on a single leg.' He spoke and cut men in two, like a sorb-apple which is halved for pickling, or as you might divide an egg with a hair; and as he cut them one after another, he bade Apollo give the face and the half of the neck a turn in order that the man might contemplate the section of himself: he would thus learn a lesson of humility. Apollo was also bidden to heal their wounds and compose their forms. So he gave a turn to the face and pulled the skin from the sides all over that which in our language is called the belly, like the purses which draw in, and he made one mouth at the centre, which he fastened in a knot (the same which is called the navel); he also moulded the breast and took out most of the wrinkles, much as a shoemaker might smooth leather upon a last; he left a few, however, in the region of the belly and navel, as a memorial of the primeval state. After the division the

Their rebellious spirit.

Various operations are performed on them by the command of Zeus.

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ARISTOPHANES.

two parts of man, each desiring his other half, came together, and throwing their arms about one another, entwined in mutual embraces, longing to grow into one, they were on the point of dying from hunger and self-neglect, because they did not like to do anything apart; and when one of the halves died and the other survived, the survivor sought another mate, man or woman as we call them, — being the sections of entire men or women,— and clung to that. They were being destroyed, when Zeus in pity of them invented a new plan: he turned the parts of generation round to the front, for this had not been always their position, and they sowed the seed no longer as hitherto like grasshoppers in the ground, but in one another; and after the transposition the male generated in the female in order that by the mutual embraces of man and woman they might breed, and the race might continue; or if man came to man they might be satisfied, and rest, and go their ways to the business of life: so ancient is the desire of one another which is implanted in us, reuniting our original nature, making one of two, and healing the state of man. Each of us when separated, having one side only, like a flat fish, is but the indenture of a man, and he is always looking for his other half. Men who are a section of that double nature which was once called Androgynous are lovers of women; adulterers are generally of this breed, and also adulterous women who lust after men: the women who are a section of the woman do not care for men, but have female attachments; the female companions are of this sort. But they who are a section of the male follow the male, and while they are young, being slices of
192 the original man, they hang about men and embrace them, and they are themselves the best of boys and youths, because they have the most manly nature. Some indeed assert that they are shameless, but this is not true; for they do not act thus from any want of shame, but because they are valiant and manly, and have a manly countenance, and they embrace that which is like them. And these when they grow up become our statesmen, and these only, which is a great proof of the truth of what I am saying. When they reach manhood they are lovers of youth, and are not naturally inclined to marry or beget children,— if at all, they do so

The two halves wander about longing after one another.

The characters of men and women depend upon the nature from which they were originally severed.

Symposium. ARISTOPHANES.

only in obedience to the law; but they are satisfied if they may be allowed to live with one another unwedded; and such a nature is prone to love and ready to return love, always embracing that which is akin to him. And when one of them meets with his other half, the actual half of himself, whether he be a lover of youth or a lover of another sort, the pair are lost in an amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and one will not be out of the other's sight, as I may say, even for a moment: these are the people who pass their whole lives together; yet they could not explain what they desire of one another. For the intense yearning which each of them has towards the other does not appear to be the desire of lover's intercourse, but of something else which the soul of either evidently desires and cannot tell, and of which she has only a dark and doubtful presentiment. Suppose Hephaestus, with his instruments, to come to the pair who are lying side by side and to say to them, 'What do you two people want of one another?' they would be unable to explain. And suppose further, that when he saw their perplexity he said: 'Do you desire to be wholly one; always day and night to be in one another's company? for if this is what you desire, I am ready to melt you into one and let you grow together, so that being two you shall become one, and while you live live a common life as if you were a single man, and after your death in the world below still be one departed soul instead of two — I ask whether this is what you lovingly desire, and whether you are satisfied to attain this?'— there is not a man of them who when he heard the proposal would deny or would not acknowledge that this meeting and melting into one another, this becoming one instead of two, was the very expression of his ancient need[1]. And the reason is that human nature was originally one and we were a whole, and the desire and pursuit of the whole is called love. 193

The strong presentiment which lovers have of they know not what.

There was a time, I say, when we were one, but now because of the wickedness of mankind God has dispersed us, as the Arcadians were dispersed into villages by the Lacedaemonians[2]. And if we are not obedient to the gods, there is a danger that we shall be split up again and go about

Mankind have been divided already; but worse may yet befall them unless

[1] Cp. Arist. Pol. ii. 4, § 6.

[2] Cp. Arist. Pol. ii. 2, § 3.

in basso-relievo, like the profile figures having only half a nose which are sculptured on monuments, and that we shall be like tallies. Wherefore let us exhort all men to piety, that we may avoid evil, and obtain the good, of which Love is to us the lord and minister; and let no one oppose him — he is the enemy of the gods who opposes him. For if we are friends of the God and at peace with him we shall find our own true loves, which rarely happens in this world at present. I am serious, and therefore I must beg Eryximachus not to make fun or to find any allusion in what I am saying to Pausanias and Agathon, who, as I suspect, are both of the manly nature, and belong to the class which I have been describing. But my words have a wider application — they include men and women everywhere; and I believe that if our loves were perfectly accomplished, and each one returning to his primeval nature had his original true love, then our race would be happy. And if this would be best of all, the best in the next degree and under present circumstances must be the nearest approach to such an union; and that will be the attainment of a congenial love. Wherefore, if we would praise him who has given to us the benefit, we must praise the god Love, who is our greatest benefactor, both leading us in this life back to our own nature, and giving us high hopes for the future, for he promises that if we are pious, he will restore us to our original state, and heal us and make us happy and blessed. This, Eryximachus, is my discourse of love, which, although different to yours, I must beg you to leave unassailed by the shafts of your ridicule, in order that each may have his turn; each, or rather either, for Agathon and Socrates are the only ones left.

they worship the Gods; they may be not halved only, but quartered.

Aristophanes deprecates ridicule.

Indeed, I am not going to attack you, said Eryximachus, for I thought your speech charming, and did I not know that Agathon and Socrates are masters in the art of love, I should be really afraid that they would have nothing to say, after the world of things which have been said already. But, for all that, I am not without hopes.

194 Socrates said: You played your part well, Eryximachus; but if you were as I am now, or rather as I shall be when Agathon has spoken, you would, indeed, be in a great strait.

Symposium.

SOCRATES, AGATHON, PHAEDRUS.

You want to cast a spell over me, Socrates, said Agathon, in the hope that I may be disconcerted at the expectation raised among the audience that I shall speak well.

I should be strangely forgetful, Agathon, replied Socrates, of the courage and magnanimity which you showed when your own compositions were about to be exhibited, and you came upon the stage with the actors and faced the vast theatre altogether undismayed, if I thought that your nerves could be fluttered at a small party of friends.

Do you think, Socrates, said Agathon, that my head is so full of the theatre as not to know how much more formidable to a man of sense a few good judges are than many fools?

Nay, replied Socrates, I should be very wrong in attributing to you, Agathon, that or any other want of refinement. And I am quite aware that if you happened to meet with any whom you thought wise, you would care for their opinion much more than for that of the many. But then we, having been a part of the foolish many in the theatre, cannot be regarded as the select wise; though I know that if you chanced to be in the presence, not of one of ourselves, but of some really wise man, you would be ashamed of disgracing yourself before him — would you not?

Yes, said Agathon.

But before the many you would not be ashamed, if you thought that you were doing something disgraceful in their presence?

Socrates is not allowed to talk.

Here Phaedrus interrupted them, saying: Do not answer him, my dear Agathon; for if he can only get a partner with whom he can talk, especially a good-looking one, he will no longer care about the completion of our plan. Now I love to hear him talk; but just at present I must not forget the encomium on Love which I ought to receive from him and from every one. When you and he have paid your tribute to the god, then you may talk.

Very good, Phaedrus, said Agathon; I see no reason why I should not proceed with my speech, as I shall have many other opportunities of conversing with Socrates. Let me say first how I ought to speak, and then speak:—

The previous speakers, instead of praising the god Love, or unfolding his nature, appear to have congratulated mankind

AGATHON.

195 on the benefits which he confers upon them. But I would rather praise the god first, and then speak of his gifts; this is always the right way of praising everything. May I say without impiety or offence, that of all the blessed gods he is the most blessed because he is the fairest and best? And he is the fairest: for, in the first place, he is the youngest, and of his youth he is himself the witness, fleeing out of the way of age, who is swift enough, swifter truly than most of us like:—Love hates him and will not come near him; but youth and love live and move together—like to like, as the proverb says. Many things were said by Phaedrus about Love in which I agree with him; but I cannot agree that he is older than Iapetus and Cronos:—not so; I maintain him to be the youngest of the gods, and youthful ever. The ancient doings among the gods of which Hesiod and Parmenides spoke, if the tradition of them be true, were done of Necessity and not of Love; had Love been in those days, there would have been no chaining or mutilation of the gods, or other violence, but peace and sweetness, as there is now in heaven, since the rule of Love began. Love is young and also tender; he ought to have a poet like Homer to describe his tenderness, as Homer says of Ate, that she is a goddess and tender:—

The god Love should be praised on his own account, and not for the benefits which he confers upon mankind.

Love is not old, but young and tender;

> 'Her feet are tender, for she sets her steps,
> Not on the ground but on the heads of men:'

herein is an excellent proof of her tenderness,—that she walks not upon the hard but upon the soft. Let us adduce a similar proof of the tenderness of Love; for he walks not upon the earth, nor yet upon the skulls of men, which are not so very soft, but in the hearts and souls of both gods and men, which are of all things the softest: in them he walks and dwells and makes his home. Not in every soul without exception, for where there is hardness he departs, where there is softness there he dwells; and nestling always with his feet and in all manner of ways in the softest of soft places, how can he be other than the softest of all things?

196 Of a truth he is the tenderest as well as the youngest, and also he is of flexile form; for if he were hard and without flexure he could not enfold all things, or wind his way into and out of every soul of man undiscovered. And a proof of

flexile;

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his flexibility and symmetry of form is his grace, which is universally admitted to be in an especial manner the attribute of Love; ungrace and love are always at war with one another. The fairness of his complexion is revealed by his habitation among the flowers; for he dwells not amid bloomless or fading beauties, whether of body or soul or aught else, but in the place of flowers and scents, there he sits and abides. Concerning the beauty of the god I have said enough; and yet there remains much more which I might say. Of his virtue I have now to speak: his greatest glory is that he can neither do nor suffer wrong to or from any god or any man; for he suffers not by force if he suffers; force comes not near him, neither when he acts does he act by force. For all men in all things serve him of their own free will, and where there is voluntary agreement, there, as the laws which are the lords of the city say, is justice. And not only is he just but exceedingly temperate, for Temperance is the acknowledged ruler of the pleasures and desires, and no pleasure ever masters Love; he is their master and they are his servants; and if he conquers them he must be temperate indeed. As to courage, even the God of War is no match for him; he is the captive and Love is the lord, for love, the love of Aphrodite, masters him, as the tale runs; and the master is stronger than the servant. And if he conquers the bravest of all others, he must be himself the bravest. Of his courage and justice and temperance I have spoken, but I have yet to speak of his wisdom; and according to the measure of my ability I must try to do my best. In the first place he is a poet (and here, like Eryximachus, I magnify my art), and he is also the source of poesy in others, which he could not be if he were not himself a poet. And at the touch of him every one becomes a poet,[1] even though he had no music in him before[1]; this also is a proof that Love is a good poet and accomplished in all the fine arts; for no one can give to another that which he has not himself, or teach that of which he has no knowledge. Who will deny that the creation of the animals is his doing? Are they not all the works of his wisdom, born and begotten of him? And as to the artists, do we not know that he only of them whom love inspires has the

fair;

just;

temperate;

courageous;

wise;

a poet too, and

a maker of poets;

an artist, and creator of order;

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[1] A fragment of the Sthenoboea of Euripides.

light of fame? — he whom Love touches not walks in darkness. *Symposium.*
The arts of medicine and archery and divination were dis- AGATHON, SOCRATES.
covered by Apollo, under the guidance of love and desire; so that he too is a disciple of Love. Also the melody of the Muses, the metallurgy of Hephaestus, the weaving of Athene, the empire of Zeus over gods and men, are all due to Love, who was the inventor of them. And so Love set in order the empire of the gods — the love of beauty, as is evident, for with deformity Love has no concern. In the days of old, as I began by saying, dreadful deeds were done among the gods, for they were ruled by Necessity; but now since the birth of Love, and from the Love of the beautiful, has sprung every good in heaven and earth. Therefore, Phaedrus, I say of Love that he is the fairest and best in himself, and the cause of what is fairest and best in all other things. And there a peacemaker;
comes into my mind a line of poetry in which he is said to be the god who

> 'Gives peace on earth and calms the stormy deep,
> Who stills the winds and bids the sufferer sleep.'

This is he who empties men of disaffection and fills them with affection, who makes them to meet together at banquets such as these: in sacrifices, feasts, dances, he is our lord — who sends courtesy and sends away discourtesy, who gives kindness ever and never gives unkindness; the friend of the good, the wonder of the wise, the amazement of the gods; desired by those who have no part in him, and precious to those who have the better part in him; parent of delicacy, luxury, desire, fondness, softness, grace; regardful of the good, regardless of the evil: in every word, work, wish, a saviour;
fear — saviour, pilot, comrade, helper; glory of gods and men, leader best and brightest: in whose footsteps let every man best and brightest.
follow, sweetly singing in his honour and joining in that sweet strain with which love charms the souls of gods and men. Such is the speech, Phaedrus, half-playful, yet having a certain measure of seriousness, which, according to my ability, I dedicate to the god.

198 When Agathon had done speaking, Aristodemus said that there was a general cheer; the young man was thought to have spoken in a manner worthy of himself, and of the god. And Socrates, looking at Eryximachus, said: Tell me, son of

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SOCRATES, ERYXIMACHUS.

Acumenus, was there not reason in my fears? and was I not a true prophet when I said that Agathon would make a wonderful oration, and that I should be in a strait?

The part of the prophecy which concerns Agathon, replied Eryximachus, appears to me to be true; but not the other part — that you will be in a strait.

Socrates tries to excuse himself from the agreement to take part on the ground that he never understood the nature of the compact. They have attributed to love an imaginary greatness and goodness; but he can only praise truly.

Why, my dear friend, said Socrates, must not I or any one be in a strait who has to speak after he has heard such a rich and varied discourse? I am especially struck with the beauty of the concluding words — who could listen to them without amazement? When I reflected on the immeasurable inferiority of my own powers, I was ready to run away for shame, if there had been a possibility of escape. For I was reminded of Gorgias, and at the end of his speech I fancied that Agathon was shaking at me the Gorginian or Gorgonian head of the great master of rhetoric, which was simply to turn me and my speech into stone, as Homer says [1], and strike me dumb. And then I perceived how foolish I had been in consenting to take my turn with you in praising love, and saying that I too was a master of the art, when I really had no conception how anything ought to be praised. For in my simplicity I imagined that the topics of praise should be true, and that this being presupposed, out of the true the speaker was to choose the best and set them forth in the best manner. And I felt quite proud, thinking that I knew the nature of true praise, and should speak well. Whereas I now see that the intention was to attribute to Love every species of greatness and glory, whether really belonging to him or not, without regard to truth or falsehood — that was no matter; for the original proposal seems to have been not that each of you should really praise Love, but only that you should appear to praise him. And so you attribute to Love every imaginable form of praise which can be gathered anywhere; and you say that 'he is all this,' and 'the cause of all that,' making him appear the fairest and best of all to those 199
who know him not, for you cannot impose upon those who know him. And a noble and solemn hymn of praise have you rehearsed. But as I misunderstood the nature of the praise when I said that I would take my turn, I must beg to

[1] Odyssey, xi. 632.

be absolved from the promise which I made in ignorance, and which (as Euripides would say [1]) was a promise of the lips and not of the mind. Farewell then to such a strain: for I do not praise in that way; no, indeed, I cannot. But if you like to hear the truth about love, I am ready to speak in my own manner, though I will not make myself ridiculous by entering into any rivalry with you. Say then, Phaedrus, whether you would like to have the truth about love, spoken in any words and in any order which may happen to come into my mind at the time. Will that be agreeable to you?

He is allowed to take his own course.

Aristodemus said that Phaedrus and the company bid him speak in any manner which he thought best. Then, he added, let me have your permission first to ask Agathon a few more questions, in order that I may take his admissions as the premisses of my discourse.

I grant the permission, said Phaedrus: put your questions. Socrates then proceeded as follows:—

Love is of something and desires something which he does not possess in himself.

In the magnificent oration which you have just uttered, I think that you were right, my dear Agathon, in proposing to speak of the nature of Love first and afterwards of his works — that is a way of beginning which I very much approve. And as you have spoken so eloquently of his nature, may I ask you further, Whether love is the love of something or of nothing? And here I must explain myself: I do not want you to say that love is the love of a father or the love of a mother — that would be ridiculous; but to answer as you would, if I asked is a father a father of something? to which you would find no difficulty in replying, of a son or daughter: and the answer would be right.

Very true, said Agathon.

And you would say the same of a mother?

He assented.

Yet let me ask you one more question in order to illustrate my meaning: Is not a brother to be regarded essentially as a brother of something?

Certainly, he replied.

That is, of a brother or sister?

Yes, he said.

[1] Eurip. Hippolytus, l. 612.

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SOCRATES, AGATHON.

And now, said Socrates, I will ask about Love:—Is Love of something or of nothing?

Of something, surely, he replied.

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Keep in mind what this is, and tell me what I want to know — whether Love desires that of which love is.

Yes, surely.

And does he possess, or does he not possess, that which he loves and desires?

Probably not, I should say.

Love, therefore, is not good or great, but desires to be good or great.

Nay, replied Socrates, I would have you consider whether 'necessarily' is not rather the word. The inference that he who desires something is in want of something, and that he who desires nothing is in want of nothing, is in my judgment, Agathon, absolutely and necessarily true. What do you think?

I agree with you, said Agathon.

Very good. Would he who is great, desire to be great, or he who is strong, desire to be strong?

That would be inconsistent with our previous admissions.

A seeming exception; of course we admit that a man may desire the continuance or increase of that which he has.

True. For he who is anything cannot want to be that which he is?

Very true.

And yet, added Socrates, if a man being strong desired to be strong, or being swift desired to be swift, or being healthy desired to be healthy, in that case he might be thought to desire something which he already has or is. I give the example in order that we may avoid misconception. For the possessors of these qualities, Agathon, must be supposed to have their respective advantages at the time, whether they choose or not; and who can desire that which he has? Therefore, when a person says, I am well and wish to be well, or I am rich and wish to be rich, and I desire simply to have what I have — to him we shall reply: 'You, my friend, having wealth and health and strength, want to have the continuance of them; for at this moment, whether you choose or no, you have them. And when you say, I desire that which I have and nothing else, is not your meaning that you want to have what you now have in the future?' He must agree with us — must he not?

He must, replied Agathon.

Then, said Socrates, he desires that what he has at present may be preserved to him in the future, which is equivalent to saying that he desires something which is non-existent to him, and which as yet he has not got:

Very true, he said.

Then he and every one who desires, desires that which he has not already, and which is future and not present, and which he has not, and is not, and of which he is in want;— these are the sort of things which love and desire seek?

Very true, he said.

Recapitulation of the argument.

Then now, said Socrates, let us recapitulate the argument. First, is not love of something, and of something too which is wanting to a man?

201 Yes, he replied.

Remember further what you said in your speech, or if you do not remember I will remind you: you said that the love of the beautiful set in order the empire of the gods, for that of deformed things there is no love — did you not say something of that kind?

Yes, said Agathon.

Yes, my friend, and the remark was a just one. And if this is true, Love is the love of beauty and not of deformity?

He assented.

And the admission has been already made that Love is of something which a man wants and has not?

True, he said.

Then Love wants and has not beauty?

Certainly, he replied.

The conclusion is, that love is not beautiful but is of the beautiful, and that the beautiful is the good.

And would you call that beautiful which wants and does not possess beauty?

Certainly not.

Then would you still say that love is beautiful?

Agathon replied: I fear that I did not understand what I was saying.

You made a very good speech, Agathon, replied Socrates; but there is yet one small question which I would fain ask: — Is not the good also the beautiful?

Yes.

Then in wanting the beautiful, love wants also the good?

Symposium.

SOCRATES, AGATHON.

I cannot refute you, Socrates, said Agathon:—Let us assume that what you say is true.

Say rather, beloved Agathon, that you cannot refute the truth; for Socrates is easily refuted.

The argument was communicated to Socrates by Diotima.

And now, taking my leave of you, I will rehearse a tale of love which I heard from Diotima of Mantineia [1], a woman wise in this and in many other kinds of knowledge, who in the days of old, when the Athenians offered sacrifice before the coming of the plague, delayed the disease ten years. She was my instructress in the art of love, and I shall repeat to you what she said to me, beginning with the admissions made by Agathon, which are nearly if not quite the same which I made to the wise woman when she questioned me: I think that this will be the easiest way, and I shall take both parts myself as well as I can [2]. As you, Agathon, suggested [3], I must speak first of the being and nature of Love, and then of his works. First I said to her in nearly the same words which he used to me, that Love was a mighty god, and likewise fair; and she proved to me as I proved to him that, by my own showing, Love was neither fair nor good. 'What do you mean, Diotima,' I said, 'is love then evil and foul?' 'Hush,' she cried; 'must that be foul which is not fair?' 'Certainly,' I said. 'And is that which is not wise, ignorant? 202 do you not see that there is a mean between wisdom and ignorance?' 'And what may that be?' I said. 'Right opinion,' she replied; 'which, as you know, being incapable of giving a reason, is not knowledge (for how can knowledge be devoid of reason? nor again, ignorance, for neither can ignorance attain the truth), but is clearly something which is a mean between ignorance and wisdom.' 'Quite true,' I replied. 'Do not then insist,' she said, 'that what is not fair is of necessity foul, or what is not good evil; or infer that because love is not fair and good he is therefore foul and evil; for he is in a mean between them.' 'Well,' I said, 'Love is surely admitted by all to be a great god.' 'By those who know or by those who do not know?' 'By all.' 'And how, Socrates,' she said with a smile, 'can Love be acknowledged to be a great god by those who say that he is

Love is not to be esteemed foul and evil because he is not fair and good;

[1] Cp. Aspasia in I. Alcibiades.

[2] Cp. Gorgias, 505 E.

[3] Supra, 195 A.

not a god at all?' 'And who are they?' I said. 'You and I are two of them,' she replied. 'How can that be?' I said. 'It is quite intelligible,' she replied; 'for you yourself would acknowledge that the gods are happy and fair — of course you would — would you dare to say that any god was not?' 'Certainly not,' I replied. 'And you mean by the happy, those who are the possessors of things good or fair?' 'Yes.' 'And you admitted that Love, because he was in want, desires those good and fair things of which he is in want?' 'Yes, I did.' 'But how can he be a god who has no portion in what is either good or fair?' 'Impossible.' 'Then you see that you also deny the divinity of Love.'

but, on the other hand, he is not a god who does not possess the good and the fair.

'What then is Love?' I asked; 'Is he mortal?' 'No.' 'What then?' 'As in the former instance, he is neither mortal nor immortal, but in a mean between the two.' 'What is he, Diotima?' 'He is a great spirit (*δαίμων*), and like all spirits he is intermediate between the divine and the mortal.' 'And what,' I said, 'is his power?' 'He interprets,' she replied, 'between gods and men, conveying and taking across to the gods the prayers and sacrifices of men, and to men the commands and replies of the gods; he is the mediator who spans the chasm which divides them, and therefore in him all is bound together, and through him the arts of the prophet and the priest, their sacrifices and
203 mysteries and charms, and all prophecy and incantation, find their way. For God mingles not with man; but through Love all the intercourse and converse of God with man, whether awake or asleep, is carried on. The wisdom which understands this is spiritual; all other wisdom, such as that of arts and handicrafts, is mean and vulgar. Now these spirits or intermediate powers are many and diverse, and one of them is Love.' 'And who,' I said, 'was his father, and who his mother?' 'The tale,' she said, 'will take time; nevertheless I will tell you. On the birthday of Aphrodite there was a feast of the gods, at which the god Poros or Plenty, who is the son of Metis or Discretion, was one of the guests. When the feast was over, Penia or Poverty, as the manner is on such occasions, came about the doors to beg. Now Plenty, who was the worse for nectar (there was no wine in those days), went into the garden of Zeus and fell

He is a great spirit who mediates between gods and men;

√

the son of Plenty and Poverty;

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into a heavy sleep; and Poverty considering her own straitenened circumstances, plotted to have a child by him, and accordingly she lay down at his side and conceived Love, who partly because he is naturally a lover of the beautiful, and because Aphrodite is herself beautiful, and also because he was born on her birthday, is her follower and attendant. And as his parentage is, so also are his fortunes. In the first place he is always poor, and anything but tender and fair, as the many imagine him; and he is rough and squalid, and has no shoes, nor a house to dwell in; on the bare earth exposed he lies under the open heaven, in the streets, or at the doors of houses, taking his rest; and like his mother he is always in distress. Like his father too, whom he also partly resembles, he is always plotting against the fair and good; he is bold, enterprising, strong, a mighty hunter, always weaving some intrigue or other, keen in the pursuit of wisdom, fertile in resources; a philosopher at all times, terrible as an enchanter, sorcerer, sophist. He is by nature neither mortal nor immortal, but alive and flourishing at one moment when he is in plenty, and dead at another moment, and again alive by reason of his father's nature. But that which is always flowing in is always flowing out, and so he is never in want and never in wealth; and, further, he is in a mean between ignorance and knowledge. The truth of the matter is this: No god is a philosopher or seeker after wisdom, for he is wise already; nor does any man who is wise seek after wisdom. Neither do the ignorant seek after wisdom. For herein is the evil of ignorance, that he who is neither good nor wise is nevertheless satisfied with himself: he has no desire for that of which he feels no want.' 'But who then, Diotima,' I said, 'are the lovers of wisdom, if they are neither the wise nor the foolish?' 'A child may answer that question,' she replied; 'they are those who are in a mean between the two; Love is one of them. For wisdom is a most beautiful thing, and Love is of the beautiful; and therefore Love is also a philosopher or lover of wisdom, and being a lover of wisdom is in a mean between the wise and the ignorant. And of this too his birth is the cause; for his father is wealthy and wise, and his mother poor and foolish. Such, my dear Socrates, is the nature of the spirit

a shoeless, houseless, ill-favoured vagabond, who is always conspiring against the fair and good;

not wise, but a lover of wisdom.

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Love. The error in your conception of him was very natural, and as I imagine from what you say, has arisen out of a confusion of love and the beloved, which made you think that love was all beautiful. For the beloved is the truly beautiful, and delicate, and perfect, and blessed; but the principle of love is of another nature, and is such as I have described.'

SOCRATES.

I said: 'O thou stranger woman, thou sayest well; but, assuming Love to be such as you say, what is the use of him to men?' 'That, Socrates,' she replied, 'I will attempt to unfold: of his nature and birth I have already spoken; and you acknowledge that love is of the beautiful. But some one will say: Of the beautiful in what, Socrates and Diotima? — or rather let me put the question more clearly, and ask: When a man loves the beautiful, what does he desire?' I answered her 'That the beautiful may be his.' 'Still,' she said, 'the answer suggests a further question: What is given by the possession of beauty?' 'To what you have asked,' I replied, 'I have no answer ready.' 'Then,' she said, 'let me put the word "good" in the place of the beautiful, and repeat the question once more: If he who loves loves the good, what is it then that he loves?' 'The possession of the good,' I said. 'And what does he gain who possesses the good?' 'Happiness,' I replied; 'there is less difficulty in
205 answering that question.' 'Yes,' she said, 'the happy are made happy by the acquisition of good things. Nor is there any need to ask why a man desires happiness; the answer is already final.' 'You are right,' I said. 'And is this wish and this desire common to all? and do all men always desire their own good, or only some men? — what say you?' 'All men,' I replied; 'the desire is common to all.' 'Why, then,' she rejoined, 'are not all men, Socrates, said to love, but only some of them? whereas you say that all men are always loving the same things.' 'I myself wonder,' I said, 'why this is.' 'There is nothing to wonder at,' she replied; 'the reason is that one part of love is separated off and receives the name of the whole, but the other parts have other names.' 'Give an illustration,' I said. She answered me as follows: 'There is poetry, which, as you know, is complex and manifold. All creation or passage of non-being into being is poetry or making, and the processes of all art are creative;

Love is of the beautiful, but in what?

Of the possession of the beautiful, which is also the possession of the good, which is happiness.

Yet love is not commonly used in this general sense.

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and the masters of arts are all poets or makers.' 'Very true.' 'Still,' she said, 'you know that they are not called poets, but have other names; only that portion of the art which is separated off from the rest, and is concerned with music and metre, is termed poetry, and they who possess poetry in this sense of the word are called poets.' 'Very true,' I said. 'And the same holds of love. For you may say generally that all desire of good and happiness is only the great and subtle power of love; but they who are drawn towards him by any other path, whether the path of money-making or gymnastics or philosophy, are not called lovers — the name of the whole is appropriated to those whose affection takes one form only — they alone are said to love, or to be lovers.' 'I dare say,' I replied, 'that you are right.' 'Yes,' she added, 'and you hear people say that lovers are seeking for their other half; but I say that they are seeking neither for the half of themselves, nor for the whole, unless the half or the whole be also a good. And they will cut off their own hands and feet and cast them away, if they are evil; for they love not what is their own, unless perchance there be some one who calls what belongs to him the good, and what belongs to another 206
the evil. For there is nothing which men love but the good. Is there anything?' 'Certainly, I should say, that there is nothing.' 'Then,' she said, 'the simple truth is, that men love the good.' 'Yes,' I said. 'To which must be added that they love the possession of the good?' 'Yes, that must be added.' 'And not only the possession, but the everlasting possession of the good?' 'That must be added too.' 'Then love,' she said, 'may be described generally as the love of the everlasting possession of the good?' 'That is most true.'

Love is birth, is creation; is the divine power of conception or parturition;

'Then if this be the nature of love, can you tell me further,' she said, 'what is the manner of the pursuit? what are they doing who show all this eagerness and heat which is called love? and what is the object which they have in view? Answer me.' 'Nay, Diotima,' I replied, 'if I had known, I should not have wondered at your wisdom, neither should I have come to learn from you about this very matter.' 'Well,' she said, 'I will teach you:— The object which they have in view

is birth in beauty, whether of body or soul.' 'I do not understand you,' I said; 'the oracle requires an explanation.' 'I will make my meaning clearer,' she replied. 'I mean to say, that all men are bringing to the birth in their bodies and in their souls. There is a certain age at which human nature is desirous of procreation — procreation which must be in beauty and not in deformity; and this procreation is the union of man and woman, and is a divine thing; for conception and generation are an immortal principle in the mortal creature, and in the inharmonious they can never be. But the deformed is always inharmonious with the divine, and the beautiful harmonious. Beauty, then, is the destiny or goddess of parturition who presides at birth, and therefore, when approaching beauty, the conceiving power is propitious, and diffusive, and benign, and begets and bears fruit: at the sight of ugliness she frowns and contracts and has a sense of pain, and turns away, and shrivels up, and not without a pang refrains from conception. And this is the reason why, when the hour of conception arrives, and the teeming nature is full, there is such a flutter and ecstacy about beauty whose approach is the alleviation of the pain of travail. For love, Socrates, is not, as you imagine, the love of the beautiful only.' 'What then?' 'The love of generation and of birth in beauty.' 'Yes,' I said. 'Yes, indeed,' she replied. 'But why of generation?' 'Because to the mortal creature, generation is a sort of eternity and immortality,' she replied; 'and if, as has been already admitted, love is of the everlasting possession of the good, all men will necessarily desire immortality together with good: Wherefore love is of immortality.'

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is not the love of the beautiful only, but of birth in beauty.

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All this she taught me at various times when she spoke of love. And I remember her once saying to me, 'What is the cause, Socrates, of love, and the attendant desire? See you not how all animals, birds, as well as beasts, in their desire of procreation, are in agony when they take the infection of love, which begins with the desire of union; whereto is added the care of offspring, on whose behalf the weakest are ready to battle against the strongest even to the uttermost, and to die for them, and will let themselves be tormented with hunger or suffer anything in order to maintain their young. Man may be supposed to act thus from reason; but why should animals

Whence arises the great power of love in men and animals?

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have these passionate feelings? Can you tell me why?' Again I replied that I did not know. She said to me: 'And do you expect ever to become a master in the art of love, if you do not know this?' 'But I have told you already, Diotima, that my ignorance is the reason why I come to you; for I am conscious that I want a teacher; tell me then the cause of this and of the other mysteries of love.' 'Marvel not,' she said, 'if you believe that love is of the immortal, as we have several times acknowledged; for here again, and on the same principle too, the mortal nature is seeking as far as is possible to be everlasting and immortal: and this is only to be attained by generation, because generation always leaves behind a new existence in the place of the old. Nay even in the life of the same individual there is succession and not absolute unity: a man is called the same, and yet in the short interval which elapses between youth and age, and in which every animal is said to have life and identity, he is undergoing a perpetual process of loss and reparation — hair, flesh, bones, blood, and the whole body are always changing. Which is true not only of the body, but also of the soul, whose habits, tempers, opinions, desires, pleasures, pains, fears, never remain the same in any one of us, but are always coming and going; and equally true of knowledge, and what is still more surprising to us mortals, not only do the sciences in general spring up and decay, so that in respect of them we are never the same; but each of them individually experiences a like change. For what is implied in the word "recollection," but the departure of knowledge, which is ever being forgotten, and is renewed and preserved by recollection, and appears to be the same although in reality new, according to that law of succession by which all mortal things are preserved, not absolutely the same, but by substitution, the old worn-out mortality leaving another new and similar existence behind — unlike the divine, which is always the same and not another? And in this way, Socrates, the mortal body, or mortal anything, partakes of immortality; but the immortal in another way. Marvel not then at the love which all men have of their offspring; for that universal love and interest is for the sake of immortality.'

The mortal nature is always changing and generating, body and soul alike;

the sciences come and go, and are preserved by recollection; and all human things, unlike the divine, are made immortal by a law of succession.

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I was astonished at her words, and said: 'Is this really

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true, O thou wise Diotima?' And she answered with all the authority of an accomplished sophist: 'Of that, Socrates, you may be assured;— think only of the ambition of men, and you will wonder at the senselessness of their ways, unless you consider how they are stirred by the love of an immortality of fame. They are ready to run risks of all kinds and greater far than they would have run for their children, and to spend money and undergo any sort of toil, and even to die, for the sake of leaving behind them a name which shall be eternal. Do you imagine that Alcestis would have died to save Admetus, or Achilles to avenge Patroclus, or your own Codrus in order to preserve the kingdom for his sons, if they had not imagined that the memory of their virtues, which still survives among us, would be immortal? Nay,' she said, 'I am persuaded that all men do all things, and the better they are the more they do them, in hope of the glorious fame of immortal virtue; for they desire the immortal.

The struggles and sufferings of human life are all of them animated by the desire of immortality.

'Those who are pregnant in the body only, betake themselves to women and beget children — this is the character of their love; their offspring, as they hope, will preserve their memory and give them the blessedness and immortality which
209 they desire in the future. But souls which are pregnant — for there certainly are men who are more creative in their souls than in their bodies — conceive that which is proper for the soul to conceive or contain. And what are these conceptions? — wisdom and virtue in general. And such creators are poets and all artists who are deserving of the name inventor. But the greatest and fairest sort of wisdom by far is that which is concerned with the ordering of states and families, and which is called temperance and justice. And he who in youth has the seed of these implanted in him and is himself inspired, when he comes to maturity desires to beget and generate. He wanders about seeking beauty that he may beget offspring — for in deformity he will beget nothing — and naturally embraces the beautiful rather than the deformed body; above all when he finds a fair and noble and well-nurtured soul, he embraces the two in one person, and to such an one he is full of speech about virtue and the nature and pursuits of a good man; and he tries to educate him; and at the touch of the beautiful which is ever

The creations of the soul,— conceptions of wisdom and virtue, the works of poets and legislators,— are fairer far than any mortal children.

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present to his memory, even when absent, he brings forth that which he had conceived long before, and in company with him tends that which he brings forth; and they are married by a far nearer tie and have a closer friendship than those who beget mortal children, for the children who are their common offspring are fairer and more immortal. Who, when he thinks of Homer and Hesiod and other great poets, would not rather have their children than ordinary human ones? Who would not emulate them in the creation of children such as theirs, which have preserved their memory and given them everlasting glory? Or who would not have such children as Lycurgus left behind him to be the saviours, not only of Lacedaemon, but of Hellas, as one may say? There is Solon, too, who is the revered father of Athenian laws; and many others there are in many other places, both among Hellenes and barbarians, who have given to the world many noble works, and have been the parents of virtue of every kind; and many temples have been raised in their honour for the sake of children such as theirs; which were never raised in honour of any one, for the sake of his mortal children.

He who would be truly initiated should pass from the concrete to the abstract, from the individual to the universal, from the universal to the universe of truth and beauty.

'These are the lesser mysteries of love, into which even you, Socrates, may enter; to the greater and more hidden 210
ones which are the crown of these, and to which, if you pursue them in a right spirit, they will lead, I know not whether you will be able to attain. But I will do my utmost to inform you, and do you follow if you can. For he who would proceed aright in this matter should begin in youth to visit beautiful forms; and first, if he be guided by his instructor aright, to love one such form only — out of that he should create fair thoughts; and soon he will of himself perceive that the beauty of one form is akin to the beauty of another; and then if beauty of form in general is his pursuit, how foolish would he be not to recognize that the beauty in every form is one and the same! And when he perceives this he will abate his violent love of the one, which he will despise and deem a small thing, and will become a lover of all beautiful forms; in the next stage he will consider that the beauty of the mind is more honourable than the beauty of the outward form. So that if a virtuous soul have but a little comeliness, he will be

content to love and tend him, and will search out and bring to the birth thoughts which may improve the young, until he is compelled to contemplate and see the beauty of institutions and laws, and to understand that the beauty of them all is of one family, and that personal beauty is a trifle; and after laws and institutions he will go on to the sciences, that he may see their beauty, being not like a servant in love with the beauty of one youth or man or institution, himself a slave mean and narrow-minded, but drawing towards and contemplating the vast sea of beauty, he will create many fair and noble thoughts and notions in boundless love of wisdom; until on that shore he grows and waxes strong, and at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science, which is the science of beauty everywhere. To this I will proceed; please to give me your very best attention:

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'He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty (and this, Socrates, is
211 the final cause of all our former toils) — a nature which in the first place is everlasting, not growing and decaying, or waxing and waning; secondly, not fair in one point of view and foul in another, or at one time or in one relation or at one place fair, at another time or in another relation or at another place foul, as if fair to some and foul to others, or in the likeness of a face or hands or any other part of the bodily frame, or in any form of speech or knowledge, or existing in any other being, as for example, in an animal, or in heaven, or in earth, or in any other place; but beauty absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting, which without diminution and without increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of all other things. He who from these ascending under the influence of true love, begins to perceive that beauty, is not far from the end. And the true order of going, or being led by another, to the things of love, is to begin from the beauties of earth and mount upwards for the sake of that other beauty, using these as steps only, and from one going on to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of

He should view beauty, not relatively, but absolutely; and he should pass by stepping-stones from earth to heaven.

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SOCRATES, ARISTOPHANES, AGATHON.

absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is. This, my dear Socrates,' said the stranger of Mantineia, 'is that life above all others which man should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute; a beauty which if you once beheld, you would see not to be after the measure of gold, and garments, and fair boys and youths, whose presence now entrances you; and you and many a one would be content to live seeing them only and conversing with them without meat or drink, if that were possible — you only want to look at them and to be with them. But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty — the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colours and vanities of human life — thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty simple and divine? Remember how in that communion only, 212
beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life?'

Such, Phaedrus — and I speak not only to you, but to all of you — were the words of Diotima; and I am persuaded of their truth. And being persuaded of them, I try to persuade others, that in the attainment of this end human nature will not easily find a helper better than love. And therefore, also, I say that every man ought to honour him as I myself honour him, and walk in his ways, and exhort others to do the same, and praise the power and spirit of love according to the measure of my ability now and ever.

The words which I have spoken, you, Phaedrus, may call an encomium of love, or anything else which you please.

When Socrates had done speaking, the company applauded, and Aristophanes was beginning to say something in answer to the allusion which Socrates had made to his own speech [1], when suddenly there was a great knocking at the door of the house, as of revellers, and the sound of a flute-girl was heard. Agathon told the attendants to go

A noise is heard as of revellers, and

[1] p. 205 E.

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AGATHON, ALCIBIADES.

Alcibiades is led in drunk and bearing a crown, which he places on the head of Agathon.

and see who were the intruders. 'If they are friends of ours,' he said, 'invite them in, but if not, say that the drinking is over.' A little while afterwards they heard the voice of Alcibiades resounding in the court; he was in a great state of intoxication, and kept roaring and shouting 'Where is Agathon? Lead me to Agathon,' and at length, supported by the flute-girl and some of his attendants, he found his way to them. 'Hail, friends,' he said, appearing at the door crowned with a massive garland of ivy and violets, his head flowing with ribands. 'Will you have a very drunken man as a companion of your revels? Or shall I crown Agathon, which was my intention in coming, and go away? For I was unable to come yesterday, and therefore I am here to-day, carrying on my head these ribands, that taking them from my own head, I may crown the head of this fairest and wisest of men, as I may be allowed to call him. Will you laugh at me because I am
213 drunk? Yet I know very well that I am speaking the truth, although you may laugh. But first tell me; if I come in shall we have the understanding of which I spoke[1]? Will you drink with me or not?'

The company were vociferous in begging that he would take his place among them, and Agathon specially invited him. Thereupon he was led in by the people who were with him; and as he was being led, intending to crown Agathon, he took the ribands from his own head and held them in front of his eyes; he was thus prevented from seeing Socrates, who made way for him, and Alcibiades took the vacant place between Agathon and Socrates, and in taking the place he embraced Agathon and crowned him. Take off his sandals, said Agathon, and let him make a third on the same couch.

Alcibiades takes the vacant place between Agathon and Socrates.

By all means; but who makes the third partner in our revels? said Alcibiades, turning round and starting up as he caught sight of Socrates. By Heracles, he said, what is this? here is Socrates always lying in wait for me, and always, as his way is, coming out at all sorts of unsuspected places: and now, what have you to say for yourself, and why are you lying here, where I perceive that you have

He insinuates that Agathon is the beloved of Socrates.

[1] Supra 212 D. Will you have a very drunken man? etc.

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SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES, ERYXIMACHUS.

contrived to find a place, not by a joker or lover of jokes, like Aristophanes, but by the fairest of the company?

He begins to be violent, and Socrates claims the protection of Agathon.

Socrates turned to Agathon and said: I must ask you to protect me, Agathon; for the passion of this man has grown quite a serious matter to me. Since I became his admirer I have never been allowed to speak to any other fair one, or so much as to look at them. If I do, he goes wild with envy and jealousy, and not only abuses me but can hardly keep his hands off me, and at this moment he may do me some harm. Please to see to this, and either reconcile me to him, or, if he attempts violence, protect me, as I am in bodily fear of his mad and passionate attempts.

He crowns Socrates as well as Agathon.

There can never be reconciliation between you and me, said Alcibiades; but for the present I will defer your chastisement. And I must beg you, Agathon, to give me back some of the ribands that I may crown the marvellous head of this universal despot — I would not have him complain of me for crowning you, and neglecting him, who in conversation is the conqueror of all mankind; and this not only once, as you were the day before yesterday, but always. Whereupon, taking some of the ribands, he crowned Socrates, and again reclined.

A new spirit passes over the dream.

Then he said: You seem, my friends, to be sober, which is a thing not to be endured; you must drink — for that was the agreement under which I was admitted — and I elect myself master of the feast until you are well drunk. Let us have a large goblet, Agathon, or rather, he said, addressing the attendant, bring me that wine-cooler. The wine-cooler which had caught his eye was a vessel holding more than two quarts — this he filled and emptied, and bade the attendant 214
fill it again for Socrates. Observe, my friends, said Alcibiades, that this ingenious trick of mine will have no effect on Socrates, for he can drink any quantity of wine and not be at all nearer being drunk. Socrates drank the cup which the attendant filled for him.

Socrates' powers of drinking.

Eryximachus said: What is this, Alcibiades? Are we to have neither conversation nor singing over our cups; but simply to drink as if we were thirsty?

Alcibiades replied: Hail, worthy son of a most wise and worthy sire!

The same to you, said Eryximachus; but what shall we do?

That I leave to you, said Alcibiades.

'The wise physician skilled our wounds to heal[1]'

shall prescribe and we will obey. What do you want?

Well, said Eryximachus, before you appeared we had passed a resolution that each one of us in turn should make a speech in praise of love, and as good a one as he could: the turn was passed round from left to right; and as all of us have spoken, and you have not spoken but have well drunken, you ought to speak, and then impose upon Socrates any task which you please, and he on his right hand neighbour, and so on.

That is good, Eryximachus, said Alcibiades; and yet the comparison of a drunken man's speech with those of sober men is hardly fair; and I should like to know, sweet friend, whether you really believe what Socrates was just now saying; for I can assure you that the very reverse is the fact, and that if I praise any one but himself in his presence, whether God or man, he will hardly keep his hands off me.

For shame, said Socrates.

Hold your tongue, said Alcibiades, for by Poseidon, there is no one else whom I will praise when you are of the company.

Well then, said Eryximachus, if you like praise Socrates.

What do you think, Eryximachus? said Alcibiades: shall I attack him and inflict the punishment before you all?

What are you about? said Socrates; are you going to raise a laugh at my expense? Is that the meaning of your praise?

I am going to speak the truth, if you will permit me.

I not only permit, but exhort you to speak the truth.

Then I will begin at once, said Alcibiades, and if I say anything which is not true, you may interrupt me if you will, and say 'that is a lie,' though my intention is to speak the truth. But you must not wonder if I speak any how as things come into my mind; for the fluent and orderly

[1] From Pope's Homer, Il. xi. 514.

Symposium. ALCIBIADES.

enumeration of all your singularities is not a task which is easy to a man in my condition.

And now, my boys, I shall praise Socrates in a figure 215
which will appear to him to be a caricature, and yet I speak, not to make fun of him, but only for the truth's sake. I say, that he is exactly like the busts of Silenus, which are set up in the statuaries' shops, holding pipes and flutes in their mouths; and they are made to open in the middle, and have images of gods inside them. I say also that he is like Marsyas the satyr. You yourself will not deny, Socrates, that your face is like that of a satyr. Aye, and there is a resemblance in other points too. For example, you are a bully, as I can prove by witnesses, if you will not confess. And are you not a flute-player? That you are, and a performer far more wonderful than Marsyas. He indeed with instruments used to charm the souls of men by the power of his breath, and the players of his music do so still: for the melodies of Olympus[1] are derived from Marsyas who taught them, and these, whether they are played by a great master or by a miserable flute-girl, have a power which no others have; they alone possess the soul and reveal the wants of those who have need of gods and mysteries, because they are divine. But you produce the same effect with your words only, and do not require the flute: that is the difference between you and him. When we hear any other speaker, even a very good one, he produces absolutely no effect upon us, or not much, whereas the mere fragments of you and your words, even at second-hand, and however imperfectly repeated, amaze and possess the souls of every man, woman, and child who comes within hearing of them. And if I were not afraid that you would think me hopelessly drunk, I would have sworn as well as spoken to the influence which they have always had and still have over me. For my heart leaps within me more than that of any Corybantian reveller, and my eyes rain tears when I hear them. And I observe that many others are affected in the same manner. I have heard Pericles and other great orators, and I thought that they spoke well, but I never had any similar feeling; my soul was not stirred

Socrates is like the busts of Silenus, which conceal within them images of gods; like Marsyas too, for his face is that of a Satyr, and his words, even when half-uttered or imperfectly repeated, exercise a greater charm over men than the melodies which Marsyas taught to Olympus.

Greater than Pericles, and the true and only orator.

[1] Cp. Arist. Pol. viii. 5. 16.

by them, nor was I angry at the thought of my own slavish state. But this Marsyas has often brought me to such a 216 pass, that I have felt as if I could hardly endure the life which I am leading (this, Socrates, you will admit); and I am conscious that if I did not shut my ears against him, and fly as from the voice of the siren, my fate would be like that of others,—he would transfix me, and I should grow old sitting at his feet. For he makes me confess that I ought not to live as I do, neglecting the wants of my own soul, and busying myself with the concerns of the Athenians; therefore I hold my ears and tear myself away from him. And he is the only person who ever made me ashamed, which you might think not to be in my nature, and there is no one else who does the same. For I know that I cannot answer him or say that I ought not to do as he bids, but when I leave his presence the love of popularity gets the better of me. And therefore I run away and fly from him, and when I see him I am ashamed of what I have confessed to him. Many a time have I wished that he were dead, and yet I know that I should be much more sorry than glad, if he were to die: so that I am at my wit's end.

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He would have reformed Alcibiades himself if the love of popularity in him had not been too strong.

And this is what I and many others have suffered from the flute-playing of this satyr. Yet hear me once more while I show you how exact the image is, and how marvellous his power. For let me tell you; none of you know him; but I will reveal him to you; having begun, I must go on. See you how fond he is of the fair? He is always with them and is always being smitten by them, and then again he knows nothing and is ignorant of all things — such is the appearance which he puts on. Is he not like a Silenus in this? To be sure he is: his outer mask is the carved head of the Silenus; but, O my companions in drink, when he is opened, what temperance there is residing within! Know you that beauty and wealth and honour, at which the many wonder, are of no account with him, and are utterly despised by him: he regards not at all the persons who are gifted with them; mankind are nothing to him; all his life is spent in mocking and flouting at them. But when I opened him, and looked within at his serious purpose, I saw in him divine and golden 217 images of such fascinating beauty that I was ready to do

His love of the fair.

His outer form only is like the outward

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form of Silenus; within are images of fascinating beauty.

in a moment whatever Socrates commanded: they may have escaped the observation of others, but I saw them. Now I fancied that he was seriously enamoured of my beauty, and I thought that I should therefore have a grand opportunity of hearing him tell what he knew, for I had a wonderful opinion of the attractions of my youth. In the prosecution of this design, when I next went to him, I sent away the attendant who usually accompanied me (I will confess the whole truth, and beg you to listen; and if I speak falsely, do you, Socrates, expose the falsehood). Well, he and I were alone together, and I thought that when there was nobody with us, I should hear him speak the language which lovers use to their loves when they are by themselves, and I was delighted. Nothing of the sort; he conversed as usual, and spent the day with me and then went away. Afterwards I challenged him to the palaestra; and he wrestled and closed with me several times when there was no one present; I fancied that I might succeed in this manner. Not a bit; I made no way with him. Lastly, as I had failed hitherto, I thought that I must take stronger measures and attack him boldly, and, as I had begun, not give him up, but see how matters stood between him and me. So I invited him to sup with me, just as if he were a fair youth, and I a designing lover. He was not easily persuaded to come; he did, however, after a while accept the invitation, and when he came the first time, he wanted to go away at once as soon as supper was over, and I had not the face to detain him. The second time, still in pursuance of my design, after we had supped, I went on conversing far into the night, and when he wanted to go away, I pretended that the hour was late and that he had much better remain. So he lay down on the couch next to me, the same on which he had supped, and there was no one but ourselves sleeping in the apartment. All this may be told without shame to any one. But what follows I could hardly tell you if I were sober. Yet as the proverb says, 'In vino veritas,' whether with boys, or without them[1]; and therefore I must speak. Nor, again, should I be justified in concealing the lofty

[1] In allusion to the two proverbs, *οἶνος καὶ παῖδες ἀληθεῖς*, and *οἶνος καὶ ἀλήθεια*.

actions of Socrates when I come to praise him. Moreover I have felt the serpent's sting; and he who has suffered, as they say, is willing to tell his fellow-sufferers only, as they
218 alone will be likely to understand him, and will not be extreme in judging of the sayings or doings which have been wrung from his agony. For I have been bitten by a more than viper's tooth; I have known in my soul, or in my heart, or in some other part, that worst of pangs, more violent in ingenuous youth than any serpent's tooth, the pang of philosophy, which will make a man say or do anything. And you whom I see around me, Phaedrus and Agathon and Eryximachus and Pausanias and Aristodemus and Aristophanes, all of you, and I need not say Socrates himself, have had experience of the same madness and passion in your longing after wisdom. Therefore listen and excuse my doings then and my sayings now. But let the attendants and other profane and unmannered persons close up the doors of their ears.

The behaviour of Socrates, and his rejection of the advances of Alcibiades.

When the lamp was put out and the servants had gone away, I thought that I must be plain with him and have no more ambiguity. So I gave him a shake, and I said: 'Socrates, are you asleep?' 'No,' he said. 'Do you know what I am meditating?' 'What are you meditating?' he said. 'I think,' I replied, 'that of all the lovers whom I have ever had you are the only one who is worthy of me, and you appear to be too modest to speak. Now I feel that I should be a fool to refuse you this or any other favour, and therefore I come to lay at your feet all that I have and all that my friends have, in the hope that you will assist me in the way of virtue, which I desire above all things, and in that path I do not believe I shall ever have a more efficient helper than yourself. And I should certainly have more reason to be ashamed of what wise men would say if I were to refuse a favour to such as you, than of what the world, who are mostly fools, would say of me if I granted it.' To these words he replied in the ironical manner which is so characteristic of him:—'Alcibiades, my friend, you have indeed an elevated aim if what you say is true, and if there really is in me any power by which you may become better; truly you must see in me some rare beauty of a kind infinitely higher than any which I see in you.

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And therefore, if you mean to share with me and to exchange beauty for beauty, you will have greatly the advantage of me; you will gain true beauty in return for appearance — like Diomede, gold in exchange for brass. But look again, sweet friend, and see whether you are not deceived in me. The mind begins to grow critical when the bodily eye fails, and it will be a long time before you get old.' Hearing this, I said: 'I have told you my purpose, which is quite serious, and do you consider what you think best for you and me.' 'That is good,' he said; 'at some other time then we will consider and act as seems best about this and about other matters.' Whereupon, I fancied that he was smitten, and that the words which I had uttered like arrows had wounded him, and so without waiting to hear more I got up, and throwing my coat about him crept under his threadbare cloak, as the time of year was winter, and there I lay during the whole night having this wonderful monster in my arms. This again, Socrates, will not be denied by you. And yet, notwithstanding all, he was so superior to my solicitations, so contemptuous and derisive and disdainful of my beauty — which really, as I fancied, had some attractions — hear, O judges; for judges you shall be of the haughty virtue of Socrates — nothing more happened, but in the morning when I awoke (let all the gods and goddesses be my witnesses) I arose as from the couch of a father or an elder brother. 219

What do you suppose must have been my feelings, after this rejection, at the thought of my own dishonour? And yet I could not help wondering at his natural temperance and self-restraint and manliness. I never imagined that I could have met with a man such as he is in wisdom and endurance. And therefore I could not be angry with him or renounce his company, any more than I could hope to win him. For I well knew that if Ajax could not be wounded by steel, much less he by money; and my only chance of captivating him by my personal attractions had failed. So I was at my wit's end; no one was ever more hopelessly enslaved by another. All this happened before he and I went on the expedition to Potidaea; there we messed together, and I had the opportunity of observing his extraordinary power of sustaining fatigue. His endurance was simply marvellous when, being 220

The wonderful endurance of Socrates when he and Alcibiades served together at Potidaea.

cut off from our supplies, we were compelled to go without food — on such occasions, which often happen in time of war, he was superior not only to me but to everybody; there was no one to be compared to him. Yet at a festival he was the only person who had any real powers of enjoyment; though not willing to drink, he could if compelled beat us all at that, — wonderful to relate! no human being had ever seen Socrates drunk; and his powers, if I am not mistaken, will be tested before long. His fortitude in enduring cold was also surprising. There was a severe frost, for the winter in that region is really tremendous, and everybody else either remained indoors, or if they went out had on an amazing quantity of clothes, and were well shod, and had their feet swathed in felt and fleeces: in the midst of this, Socrates with his bare feet on the ice and in his ordinary dress marched better than the other soldiers who had shoes, and they looked daggers at him because he seemed to despise them.

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I have told you one tale, and now I must tell you another, which is worth hearing,

'Of the doings and sufferings of the enduring man'

while he was on the expedition. One morning he was thinking about something which he could not resolve; he would not give it up, but continued thinking from early dawn until noon — there he stood fixed in thought; and at noon attention was drawn to him, and the rumour ran through the wondering crowd that Socrates had been standing and thinking about something ever since the break of day. At last, in the evening after supper, some Ionians out of curiosity (I should explain that this occurred not in winter but in summer), brought out their mats and slept in the open air that they might watch him and see whether he would stand all night. There he stood until the following morning; and with the return of light he offered up a prayer to the sun, and went his way[1]. I will also tell, if you please — and indeed I am bound to tell — of his courage in battle; for who but he saved my life? Now this was the engagement in which I received the prize of valour: for I was wounded and he would not leave me, but he rescued me and my arms; and

The long fits of abstraction to which he was subject.

How he saved the life of Alcibiades, and ought to have received the prize of

[1] Cp. supra, 175 B.

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valour which was conferred on Alcibiades on account of his rank.

he ought to have received the prize of valour which the generals wanted to confer on me partly on account of my rank, and I told them so (this, again, Socrates will not impeach or deny), but he was more eager than the generals that I and not he should have the prize. There was another occasion on which his behaviour was very remarkable — in 221
the flight of the army after the battle of Delium, where he served among the heavy-armed, — I had a better opportunity of seeing him than at Potidaea, for I was myself on horseback, and therefore comparatively out of danger. He and Laches were retreating, for the troops were in flight, and I met them and told them not to be discouraged, and promised to remain with them; and there you might see him, Aristophanes, as you describe [1], just as he is in the streets of Athens, stalking like a pelican, and rolling his eyes, calmly contemplating enemies as well as friends, and making very intelligible to anybody, even from a distance, that whoever attacked him would be likely to meet with a stout resistance; and in this way he and his companion escaped — for this is the sort of man who is never touched in war; those only are pursued who are running away headlong. I particularly observed how superior he was to Laches in presence of mind. Many are the marvels which I might narrate in praise of Socrates; most of his ways might perhaps be paralleled in another man, but his absolute unlikeness to any human being that is or ever has been is perfectly astonishing. You may imagine Brasidas and others to have been like Achilles; or you may imagine Nestor and Antenor to have been like Pericles; and the same may be said of other famous men, but of this strange being you will never be able to find any likeness, however remote, either among men who now are or who ever have been — other than that which I have already suggested of Silenus and the satyrs; and they represent in a figure not only himself, but his words. For, although I forgot to mention this to you before, his words are like the images of Silenus which open; they are ridiculous when you first hear them; he clothes himself in language that is like the skin of the wanton satyr — for his talk is of pack-asses and smiths and cobblers and curriers,

His coolness in battle; his absolute unlikeness to any other man.

[1] Aristoph. Clouds, 362.

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SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES, AGATHON.

and he is always repeating the same things in the same words[1], so that any ignorant or inexperienced person might
222 feel disposed to laugh at him; but he who opens the bust and sees what is within will find that they are the only words which have a meaning in them, and also the most divine, abounding in fair images of virtue, and of the widest comprehension, or rather extending to the whole duty of a good and honourable man.

He is the Satyr without and the God within.

This, friends, is my praise of Socrates. I have added my blame of him for his ill-treatment of me; and he has ill-treated not only me, but Charmides the son of Glaucon, and Euthydemus the son of Diocles, and many others in the same way — beginning as their lover he has ended by making them pay their addresses to him. Wherefore I say to you, Agathon, 'Be not deceived by him; learn from me and take warning, and do not be a fool and learn by experience, as the proverb says.'

When Alcibiades had finished, there was a laugh at his outspokenness; for he seemed to be still in love with Socrates. You are sober, Alcibiades, said Socrates, or you would never have gone so far about to hide the purpose of your satyr's praises, for all this long story is only an ingenious circumlocution, of which the point comes in by the way at the end; you want to get up a quarrel between me and Agathon, and your notion is that I ought to love you and nobody else, and that you and you only ought to love Agathon. But the plot of this Satyric or Silenic drama has been detected, and you must not allow him, Agathon, to set us at variance.

The purport of Alcibiades' speech, according to Socrates, was only to get up a quarrel between him and Agathon.

I believe you are right, said Agathon, and I am disposed to think that his intention in placing himself between you and me was only to divide us; but he shall gain nothing by that move; for I will go and lie on the couch next to you.

Agathon changes his place that he may be nearer Socrates and not so near Alcibiades.

Yes, yes, replied Socrates, by all means come here and lie on the couch below me.

Alas, said Alcibiades, how I am fooled by this man; he is determined to get the better of me at every turn. I do beseech you, allow Agathon to lie between us.

Certainly not, said Socrates; as you praised me, and I in

[1] Cp. Gorg. 490, 491, 517.

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SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES, AGATHON.

turn ought to praise my neighbour on the right, he will be out of order in praising me again when he ought rather to be praised by me, and I must entreat you to consent to this, and not be jealous, for I have a great desire to praise the youth. 223

Hurrah! cried Agathon, I will rise instantly, that I may be praised by Socrates.

The usual way, said Alcibiades; where Socrates is, no one else has any chance with the fair; and now how readily has he invented a specious reason for attracting Agathon to himself.

Another band of revellers enters, and the company drink largely, the wiser part withdrawing.

Agathon arose in order that he might take his place on the couch by Socrates, when suddenly a band of revellers entered, and spoiled the order of the banquet. Some one who was going out having left the door open, they had found their way in, and made themselves at home; great confusion ensued, and every one was compelled to drink large quantities of wine. Aristodemus said that Eryximachus, Phaedrus, and others went away — he himself fell asleep, and as the nights were long took a good rest: he was awakened towards daybreak by a crowing of cocks, and when he awoke, the others were either asleep, or had gone away; there remained only Socrates, Aristophanes, and Agathon, who were drinking out of a large goblet which they passed round, and Socrates was discoursing to them. Aristodemus was only half awake, and he did not hear the beginning of the discourse; the chief thing which he remembered was Socrates compelling the other two to acknowledge that the genius of comedy was the same with that of tragedy, and that the true artist in tragedy was an artist in comedy also. To this they were constrained to assent, being drowsy, and not quite following the argument. And first of all Aristophanes dropped off, then, when the day was already dawning, Agathon. Socrates, having laid them to sleep, rose to depart; Aristodemus, as his manner was, following him. At the Lyceum he took a bath, and passed the day as usual. In the evening he retired to rest at his own home.

On the following morning Socrates is still awake, and is maintaining the thesis that the genius of comedy is the same as that of tragedy.

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